ABYSSINIA.*

Accurate details of Abyssinian geography will for some time to come be eagerly sought for. We have ourselves often referred to the ancient kingdom of Auxume, in Ethiopia, with its metropolis of prostrate obelisks—Axum—and its seaport—Adule—with a frequented high road between the two—the latter, as we all along advised, the spot selected for the landing of the British forces. There is another district which is contained between the Black and the Blue Niles, concerning which further information is very desirable. It was known to the Greeks as the great peninsula, or island of Saba, afterwards Meroë, in the same manner as the peninsula above the confluence of the White and Blue Niles is called the island of Senaar, or "Al Jezirah." There is, however, another possible reading, which is adopted by Josephus (lib. ii. Antiquit. cap. 5), who describes Meroë as rendered almost impregnable by the waters of the Nile flowing round it, and which would hence have constituted the island of Meroë; and the difficulties to the approach thereunto were augmented by the rivers Astapus and Astaborras—that is to say, by the Blue and Black Niles.

But about 220 B.C. Eratosthenes, the librarian of Alexandria, had a knowledge of the entire course of the river more correct than has been obtained by moderns until within a few years. It was from Eratosthenes that Strabo derived his information on the peninsula of Meroë, and it was probably from the same source that Artemidorus of Ephesus learnt that the city of Meroë was fifteen days distant from the sea. Eratosthenes described the island of Meroë as formed of two branches of the Nile, named Astaboras and Astapus, and added that the latter was sometimes called Astasobas. The latter name may be accounted for by the discovery of late travellers, to the effect that on the right bank of the Bahr-el-Azrak, or Blue Nile, a little above the fork at Khartum, there are ruins called Soba, or Saba, apparently of the same age as those of Meroë; whence it would appear that the Ast, which enters into the composition of this and the two other names of the rivers of Meroë, implies "river," having been probably introduced into that country by the Egyptian Greeks from Macedonia, where we find the same elements having the same import.

Josephus, it is to be observed, notices the city of Saba, in Ethiopia, and relates that Cambyses, after driving the Ethiopians into that place,

* The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia, and the Hamran Arabs. By Sir Samuel W. Baker, M.A., F.R.G.S., &c. Macmillan and Co.

gave to Meroë the name of his own sister (ii. Antiquit. c. v.). There are not, indeed, wanting those who identify the queen of this Ethiopic Saba with the Queen of Sheba (Cellarius, Notitiæ Orbis Antiquit. ii. p. 957), a tradition which is, curiously enough, countenanced by the circumstances that the polity of Meroë—the capital of all Ethiopia, as Herodotus describes it (ii. 29)—was peculiarly distinguished by the fact that the sceptre was often held by female sovereigns, whereas in Egypt we find a queen-regent only once mentioned—Nitocris, in the third dynasty; as also by the tradition, so dear to the monarchies of Abyssinia, that they are descended from the offspring of Solomon and the Queen of Saba or of Ethiopia. The names of Sheba, Seba or Saba, and Sabæans, were, it is well known, applied in Holy Writ to three different tribes: first, to the Sebaïm with a *samech*, the descendants of Seba or Saba, son of Cush, who ultimately settled in Ethiopia, and whose capital may have been Saba, on the Astasobas; secondly, to the Shebaïm with a *shin*, the descendants of Sheba, son of Jokshan, the Sabai of the Greeks and Romans, who settled in Arabia Felix; and thirdly, to another tribe of Shebans—a horde of Bedawīn marauders in the days of Job (i. 15), supposed to be descendants of Sheba, son of Jokshan (Gen. xxv. 33). If the kingdom of Saba was the far-famed Meroë, and the kingdom of Sheba the no less famous Yemen, then it is with peculiar propriety that the King of African Saba in the West, and the King of Asiatic Sheba in the East, are represented by the Psalmist (Ps. lxxii. 10) as bearing their united homage to the "great King of Judah." The commerce and wealth of these Sabæans of Ethiopia, as also their gigantic stature, are alluded to by the prophet Isaiah (xliii. 3, xlv. 14); and his testimony is confirmed by the profane writers of antiquity. The allusion made to the Queen of Sheba in Matt. xii. 42, where our Lord speaks of her as coming "from the earth's extremes," would appear to apply better to the remote regions of the Upper Nile than to the better-known territory of Yemen.

But in what concerns the commerce and wealth of the Sabæans of Ethiopia, alluded to by Isaiah, all antiquity unites in describing Meroë as a region of singular opulence, both as respects its mineral wealth and its cereal and leguminous productions. It possessed, on its eastern frontier, mines of gold, iron, copper, and salt; its woods of date-palm, almond-trees, and ilex, yielded abundant supplies of both fruit and timber for export and home consumption; its meadows supported large herds of cattle, or produced double harvests of gigantic millet (dhurra); and its forests and swamps abounded with wild beasts and game, which the natives caught and salted for food.*

The banks of the Nile are so high in this region that Meroë derives no benefit from the inundation, and as rain falls scantily in the north, even in the wet season, according to Strabo (xv. p. 690), the lands removed from the river would, in all probability, have been as desert in ancient

* Herodotus has placed it on record that in the time of Menes, the first mortal who reigned over Egypt, all Lower Egypt, except the district of Thebes, was a morass, and that no part of the land that now exists below Lake Mœris was then above water; and Dr. Beke, considering that the alluvial delta or island of Meroë must necessarily have been deposited by the waters of the Blue and Black Niles at a period antecedent to that of Egypt, also seems inclined to think that Meroë anteceded Thebes as well as Memphis as a primeval seat of population and civilisation.

times as they were represented to be at present, were it not for the system of irrigation so extensively practised by the Ethiopians, and by which the waters of the Black Nile and its Abyssinian tributaries were probably diverted to fertilise the land.

The pyramids scattered over the plains of this Ethiopic Mesopotamia indicate the existence of numerous cities besides the capital, nor has the region been as yet explored in its central portions. It is true that from its situation between Egypt and the Red Sea—the regions which produced spice, and those which yielded gold-dust, ivory, and precious stones—Meroë was from very early times the seat of an active and diversified commerce. It was one of the capital centres of the caravan trade from Libya Interior, from the havens of the Red Sea, and from Egypt and Ethiopia. It was, in fact, the receptacle of the Libyan traffic from Carthage, on the one side, and from Adule and Berenice on the other. But still there must have been a vast amount of local productiveness and territorial resources to have maintained that wealth and population, to the existence of which the ruins of its cities, as far as they have been explored, as well as the testimony of all antiquity, bear evidence. The fertility of the land may have gone with the neglect of irrigation; but what have become of the mines of gold, iron, copper, and salt? They remain to be discovered in the highlands of Abyssinia, which bound the peninsula to the east and south.*

The ruins which have been discovered are those of either temples or public monuments, for the cities themselves, being built of bricks dried in the sun, or of palm-branches, speedily crumbled away in a latitude to which the tropical rains partially extend. The most southerly of the ruins of Meroë itself are known as Naga Jebel Ardan, and consist of remains of four temples built in the Egyptian style, but of late date. The largest of them was dedicated to the ram-headed deity Ammon. The principal portico of this temple is detached from the main building—an unusual practice in Egyptian architecture—and is approached through an avenue of sphinxes, seven feet high, and also bearing the ram's head. The sculptures, like those of Egypt, represent historical events—Ammon receiving the homage of a queen, or a king holding his captives by the hair, and preparing to strike off their heads with an axe. At Wāad Naja, about a mile from the Blue Nile, are the remains of a sandstone temple, eighty-nine feet in length, bearing on the capital of its columns the figures and emblems of Ptah, Athor, and Typhon. These ruins are amidst mounds of brick, which betoken the former presence of an extensive city. Again, among the hollows of the sandstone hills, and surrounded by the desert, some sixteen or seventeen miles west of the Blue Nile, are the ruins of Al Masāwirat, presenting the remains of no

* Sir S. W. Baker, it is to be remarked, found gold in small quantities at Goorashee, on the Atbara, and Melek Nimmur informed him that gold-dust was common in the sand of most of the ravines in his territory, and that if he would remain in the country he might discover considerable quantities. "I have no doubt that valuable minerals," he adds, "exist in large quantities throughout the lofty chain of Abyssinian mountains." Copper was found by the same traveller on the Lower Settite, and lead in the upper portions of the same river. The modern Egyptians have, it is well known, long worked gold-mines above Fazoghlu, on the Blue Nile.

less than eight temples, connected with one another by galleries or colonnades, and divided into courts and cloisters. The style of the architecture is like that of the ruins at Axum and Adule, of the era of the Ptolemys. Lower down the Nile, and about two miles from the river, groups of pyramids are met with, some of which have a basis of sixty-three feet square, others less than twelve; and the loftiest is one hundred and sixty feet in height. There are, at least, eighty of these pyramids, and they are supposed to mark the site of a necropolis, with the tombs of great and royal personages.

The hills of ruins at Meroë are known to the Arabs as Jebel Aīmālī, and the pyramids, which the ass-drivers in Cairo call Piramill, are here called Taralib, or Tarabill. They are also known as Chellal al Assūr, equivalent to ruins of an Assyrian origin. The city would certainly appear to have been islanded. The low country towards the pyramids, down to the village Maruga, Werne remarks ("Expedition to Discover the Sources of the White Nile," vol. i. p. 69), where a canal filled with mud now disembogues into the Nile, would plainly show this, if a bed of rocks, perhaps intended to separate the sacred city from the necropolis, were not just before that heap of rubbish, on which is pointed out the forge, or the heavy scoriæ of metals, said to have been brought by the powerful kafr, or infidel, Ibu Timali Al Kebir.

If Senaar was so named from the land of Shinar, in Babylonia, it is not surprising that its fellow, Mesopotamia, should have been once known as the land of Assur or Assyria; but it would be difficult to find a modern name for the same territory. By some, it is designated as Upper or Eastern Sūdan, or Soudan; by others, as Atbara, from the river of the same name; and it is divided into the two provinces of Shendy, or of Meroë, which town is represented by a modern place of that name; and of Halfay, or Aguido—Halfay representing the ancient Saba, and not far from it, but on the Nile. The whole region may, however, be considered as utterly unexplored, except on the three sides of the triangle, formed by the Nile as the base, and the Blue and Black Rivers as the two sides. There is a caravan route from Abu Harrar, or Harraz, to Suakim, by Goz-Rejeb, or Güzurujup, with a site called Rayrah, half way between the two rivers; but we have no account of it. Sir Samuel and Lady Baker have travelled over the three sides of the triangle without penetrating into the interior; but Sir Samuel has placed on record that the whole extent of country from the river Rahad to Kassala, between 13 degrees and 16 degrees north latitude, is highly adapted for cotton cultivation, with regular rains from June to September 15th. Both Sir Samuel's researches, and the map made by Carl Graf Krockow von Wickerode, attached to his work describing his journey from Suakim to Matammah, and by far the most detailed and accurate that we yet possess of the borders of this region, attest to an extent of irrigation and a number of watercourses coming down from the Abyssinian highlands towards Meroë, the largest of which are perennial, which, if husbanded or diverted from their natural channel—the Black Nile—would well account for the ancient fertility of Meroë, and might still be made to convert it into one of the most fertile provinces of the long valley of the Nile.

Sir Samuel Baker has been taken to task for having omitted to notice that the Hamran Arab sword-hunters, of whom he makes a feature in

his book, as capturing elephants by dividing the tendon of Achilles, had been previously made known by the veteran traveller Bruce. Such an oversight really presents nothing remarkable, and it might be retorted that both Sir Samuel Baker and his critic—also, probably, a well-known Abyssinian traveller—have overlooked the fact that the territory hunted by the Hamran Arabs, and all that extent of country which is comprised between the Black Nile and the Khor-al-Gash, and which abounds in elephants, rhinoceros, giraffes, lions, buffaloes, and antelopes, was in all probability the great elephant hunting-ground of the Ptolemys, whose port, built by Eumêdès, was called from that very circumstance Ptolemais Theron, θηρῶν, *ferarum*, or επὶ θηρας, *supervenationes*. Dean Vincent devoted a chapter of thirteen quarto pages, in his "Commerce and Navigation of the Ancients," to recovering the site of the town whence Ptolemy Philadelphus derived the elephants for his army. But the non-adherence to the parallel established by Eratosthenes, as his first and most important of all, has thrown Gossellin, La Rochette, and other commentators on the Periplus of Arrian, altogether in error as to the site of Ptolemais, as also of Adule, as well as Dean Vincent. Meroë, as the first parallel of Eratosthenes, became an object of the greatest importance to all the geographers and astronomers who succeeded; and if there is any one point more than another upon which we can suppose them to have searched for accuracy, or acquired it, it is this. But having assumed that parallel, instead of as Ptolemy gave it, at 16 deg. 24 min., or in his tables at 16 deg. 25 min., as at a bay in the middle of the Shumata, or Nubian Forest, in 17 deg. 6 min., this forest has been hitherto erroneously accepted as the sole hunting-ground of the Ptolemys, and the bay as the site of the harbour for their hunting trophies.

The hunting of elephants established at Ptolemais is confirmed by Agatharchides, Diodorus, Strabo, and other authors, and, what is more interesting, as attesting the handing down of customs from generation to generation, the manner of ham-stringing these animals was an art as perfectly understood by the ancient barbarians (Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 772; Diodor. lib. iii. p. 161; Dean Vincent, ii. p. 103) as by Bruce's or Baker's aggageers. A relish for the flesh of elephants and hippopotami, so signally illustrated in Baker's work, appears, indeed, to have been a characteristic of the dwellers in this region, so favoured by wild beasts, from time immemorial; for we are told by Agatharchides that Ptolemy would have redeemed the life of the elephant at any price, as he wanted elephants for his army; but he met with a refusal from the native hunters, who declared they would not forego the luxury of their repast for all the wealth of Egypt. It is recorded in the celebrated inscription of Adule, that Ptolemy invaded Asia with his land and sea forces, and "with elephants from the country of the Troglodytes and Ethiopians. This body of elephants was first collected out of these countries by his father and himself, and brought into Egypt and tamed for the service of war." This fact is further confirmed by the historians, and is preserved by Agatharchides, as almost the only commerce remaining on this coast in the time of Philomêter.

Sir Samuel W. Baker and his long-enduring wife arrived at the Atbara junction in June, 1861, at a time when that great river was no longer a tributary to the Nile, but its bed, upwards of four hundred yards

in width, was a mere sheet of glaring sand—a desert highway for the torrents of the rainy season. The banks of this dry watercourse were about thirty feet in depth. A narrow belt of dôm-palms and mimosas fringed the margin, and beyond all was desert—the same inhospitable solitude that characterises the Nubian plains. A thread of green foliage alone marked the river's course through this yellow, dreary wilderness.

Our travellers' route lay on the bank of the river for about one hundred and eighty miles to Gozerajup (or Güzurujup), as he writes the Goz-Rejeb of the maps. Throughout this great length of its course there was no change—the same glaring bed of sand with steep banks fringed with trees; but at intervals a deep bend in the river's course broke the monotony of its desert-bed by forming pools from a quarter of a mile to a mile in length. Confined in these comparatively little lacustrine expanses were all the inhabitants of the river, which, free in the great flood during the rainy season, were prisoners during the dry months in these narrow spaces until released by the rising of the waters!

The extraordinary number and varieties of living creatures that were in consequence gathered together can be imagined. The pools, though insignificant in size, were deep, and in their waters were congregated immense crocodiles, turtles, and fish of monstrous proportions. In one of the largest pools called Kollololab, a herd of hippopotami added to the confusion. At this spot were also some Bisharīn Arabs, who, with their flocks, had sought this welcome watering-place, and fed their famishing goats by shaking the seed-pods from the mimosas with long crooks; the seed, which is oily, and very similar to linseed, was greedily devoured by the animals in the absence of green food. The few cattle they possessed were fed upon the nuts of the dôm-palm. These are in great abundance throughout the desert-course of the Atbara, and support both man and beast when other supplies fail. This species of palm produces about two hundred nuts, the size of an orange, but of an oval shape. To prepare it for food, the exterior portion, which is perfectly hard and polished, is bruised between stones, and detached from the shell of the nut in the form of a brown resinous powder; this is ground into flour, boiled into a porridge, and eaten with milk, the flavour resembling that of gingerbread. The interior shell of the nut, divested of its outer coating, is about the size of a goose's egg. When broken, it produces a kernel, which is known in Europe as vegetable ivory. It is roasted in large piles, then soaked with water, and pounded in a mortar as food for cattle. Thus, in this desert-land, the unfortunate cows have nothing but nuts to crack during the dry season, when the scant vegetation produced by the few showers that constitute the rainy season has been devoured, or is withered up. The supply of milk—the Arab's luxury—is accordingly most limited. The only resource of the country is indeed the bed of the Black Nile; and the fringe of dôm-palms and mimosas on its margin become the asylum for the few Arabs who, during the season of rain, roam the plains in search of verdure, but who depend upon the scanty produce of the river for their existence during eight months of burning drought. In such countries, the few human beings that cling to them for life become nomadic, not from choice, but from necessity; the changes produced by seasons entails changes of locality, and to which

the barrenness of the land renders an immense surface necessary for the flocks.

When Sir S. Baker arrived at Kollololab, he heard that a man had been recently killed by a hippopotamus. The man had cultivated a patch of water-melons by the side of the pool, and the river-horses, who found that no fruit is better adapted for their mouths than water-melons, and further, that it was very agreeable, refreshing, and nourishing at the same time, not only entered into forcible possession, but actually refused to quit when peremptorily requested to do so. Not only did they refuse to quit, but when the unfortunate Arab proceeded from expostulation to blows, one unwieldy brute resisted the process, and catching the proprietor in his huge jaws, gave him a crunch as if he, too, had been a water-melon. Our traveller, accordingly, made his first acquaintance with hippopotami at this place. He found them very careless and independent. They had finished the patch of water-melons as well as the proprietor, but he was soon enabled to kill two of them, to the great delight of the Arabs, who loaded about twelve camels with the flesh—sufficient for many hundred men.

Not only were the pools of the Atbara the resort of the crowded inhabitants of the river, but they were also a centre of attraction to birds and beasts from the desert, that were compelled to travel immense distances to the only watering-places afforded throughout the regions around; sand-grouse arrived in thousands in early morning and evening; birds in great number, and of beautiful plumage, lived in the narrow woods that fringed the river; thousands of doves thronged the trees; while gazelles and wild asses, the only quadrupeds of the desert, visited the welcome waters of the Atbara.

The stay at the pools was not, indeed, without its charms, notwithstanding the overpowering sun. "There was an indescribable delight in the cool night, when, in the perfect certainty of fine weather, we could rest in the open air with the clear, bright, starlit sky above us. There were no mosquitoes, neither were there any of the insect plagues of the tropics; the air was too dry for the gnat tribe, and the moment of sunset was the signal for perfect enjoyment, free from the usual drawbacks of African travel. As the river's pools were the only drinking-places for birds and game, the gun supplied not only my own party, but I had much to give away to the Arabs in exchange for goat's milk, the meal of the dôm-nuts," &c. Add to this, there was stalking antelopes in the desert, and angling—extraordinary angling—in the pools, the captures varying from a few pounds to a hundred pounds in weight!

The scene was soon to change. On June 23, 1861, in the still night, at about eight P.M., a sound like distant thunder was heard. Hardly had the traveller raised his head to listen more attentively, when a confusion of voices arose from the Arabs' camp, with a sound of many feet, and in a few minutes they rushed down to the river-bed, shouting in the darkness, "El bahr! el bahr!"—"The river! the river!" All were up in an instant. It was as much as they could save themselves and their traps from the impending flood. Soon the sound of rushing waters in the darkness beneath announced that the river had come, and on the morning of the 24th—wonder of the desert! most truly does Sir S. Baker term it—where yesterday there had been a barren sheet of glaring

sand, a magnificent stream, some five hundred yards in width, and from fifteen to twenty feet in depth, was rushing past, carrying with it bamboos, and reeds, and other wrecks. The rains were pouring in Abyssinia, and the crowded inhabitants of the pool were set free, and rejoiced in the mighty stream of the Atbara!

The journey along the margin of the Atbara, from the pools upwards, was similar to the entire route from Berber—a vast desert, with the narrow bend of trees that marked the course of the river. On June 30, our travellers reached Güzurujup, the first permanent village on the Black Nile, and about two hundred and twenty miles from its junction with the Nile proper. It is peopled by Bisharīn Arabs, the largest Arab tribe of Nubia, and who pay taxes to the Viceroy of Egypt. At this point there are four pyramidical hills of naked granite, which constitute remarkable landmarks for a great distance.

At this point, the travellers left the Atbara to proceed ninety miles to the left to Kassala. The aspect of the country now changed its character. From Cairo to this point it had been interminable sand and pebbles; but now the sand had disappeared, and a rich soil, which in the rainy season is covered with excellent pasturage, had taken its place. Fifty miles farther south, they arrived, indeed, at a most fertile country, abounding in rich grass scattered with mimosas. The bush abounded in antelopes, gazelles, and guinea-fowl, and was no longer a desert. "The curious landmark of Güzurujup," Sir Samuel remarks, "was an everlasting beacon that marked the frontier of the Nubian desert; it was a giant warder, that seemed to guard the living south from the dreadful skeleton of nature on the north." Our travellers had, in fact, quitted Nubia at these natural pyramids—older than those built by man—and entered upon Abyssinia. The interval between Güzurujup and Kassala is occupied by the Hadanduwa and Hallunga Arabs; and as there are no terrible flies, the country offers, in the rainy season, a paradise to both men and beasts; thousands of camels with their young, hundreds of thousands of goats, sheep, and cattle, are accompanied by the Arabs and their families, who encamp on the happy pastures during the season of plenty. During the dry season, the Arabs encamp at a place called Su-jalup, half way between Güzurujup and Kassala, where there are wells and constant verdure. Sir S. Baker supposes this to be an extreme point of the Khor-al-Gash, or Mareb, on its subterranean way towards the Atbara, the waters of which river being mainly used for irrigation, as probably those of the Black Nile itself were in olden times, only occasionally reach the Atbara, according to Munzinger, who discovered the Gash-da, or mouth of the Khor-al-Gash, on the Atbara, a little north of where the confluence had been marked by M. de Courval. Recent researches of Dr. Schweinfurth have also shown that the bifurcation of the Khor-al-Gash, alluded to by Strabo, after Artemidorus, and so long insisted upon by Dr. Beke as a means of ruining Egypt, as suggested by Abbuquerque, by withdrawing the waters of the Atbara into the Red Sea, really exists.

Kassala is a large place with a considerable garrison, being the advance post of the Egyptians in Abyssinia, unless, as is supposed, they have since Sir S. Baker's visit occupied what is marked as Mek Nimr's territory in the map south of the Basa or Barīya territory, and the

elephant-hunting country of the Hamran Arabs. The occupation is said to have been founded on the treachery of the existing ruler of Tigray, who, at the very same time that he is described as going over to the Roman Catholic Church to propitiate the French in his pretensions to the throne of Abyssinia, was conciliating the Egyptians by the murder of the last panther king (Melek Nimmur), and the probable cession of the Basa and other territories to the east of the Atbara and at the western foot of the Abyssinian highlands from Kassala to Matammah! Abyssinia is truly to the present day what it has ever been historically—a country divided within itself. Sir S. Baker excuses the occupation of this portion of the country, and the founding of Kassala as an Egyptian stronghold for the collection of taxes, some twenty-five years ago, upon the plea that prior to the annexation all the tribes were at war among themselves; but the same plea would apply to any power that should annex all Abyssinia and replace a divided and ruinous rule by one that would be strong, and, at the same time, conducive to prosperity, by promoting the well-being of these down-trodden populations.

From Kassala our travellers, to a certain extent, retraced their steps westward again to the Atbara. Their way lay over a flat fertile country "of park-like character," abounding in antelopes. At Gurassi, where they joined the river, it had changed its character. Instead of flowing through a flat and sterile desert upon a level with its margin, it occupied the middle of a depression about a hundred and fifty feet lower than the adjacent country, which consisted of vast table-lands of rich soil, but suddenly broken into countless ravines for about a mile on either side of the river, forming a valley of about two miles in width, full of landslips, showing the effects of the rapid drainage of the surrounding country.

Crossing the river at Gurassi, our travellers were hospitably entertained by the great Sheikh Abū Sinn, chief of all the Shukariya Arabs, and one of the last to give in his submission to the Egyptians. The chief place, or market-town of Katarif—to adopt Baker's orthography, which in this case is acceptable, generally written Gedarif, and by the Germans Quedarif—is called by Dufton Hellet-es-Sūk, but by others Sūk Abū Sinn, or Abū Sinn's market. It is, indeed, the great market-town of the sheikh of the Shukariya, who was at this moment on his way to the north. He is described as the grandest specimen of an Arab. About eighty years of age, he is as hale as a man of fifty, upwards of six feet in height, stout in proportion, perfectly erect, and, with his long flowing white beard, a perfect model of a patriarch of the desert. The Arabs attribute the strength of his old age to his habit of drinking two pounds of melted butter daily. His children look as old as himself, and his descendants are as the sands of the plain. No sheikh is so revered by all the tribes of Upper Egypt as Abū Sinn, who, by right the chief of the Shukariya, has also been nominated the head of all the tribes under the jurisdiction of the Egyptian government in Eastern Sūdan or Meroë.

Abū Sinn supplied the party with camels, and one of his grandsons acted as a guide farther south. As it was now raining more or less daily, as little delay as possible was incurred on the road, which followed the left bank of the river, and on the fourth day they arrived at Tomat, situated at the fork of the Atbara and the Settite or Takkazie, the latter being the more important stream. Tomat constitutes the head-quarters

of Atalan Wat Said, the chief sheikh of the Dabainas Arabs, and a party of Egyptian irregular cavalry were also quartered here to protect the Dabainas from the raids of Melek Nimmur.

Mounted upon milk-white camels of thorough breed and easy action, our travellers were conveyed at the rate of ten miles an hour from Tomat to Sūfi, on the Atbara, before the heat of the day had commenced. As they had to pass the rainy season at this miserable village of some thirty straw huts, for the Egyptians had attacked and utterly destroyed the old town of Sūfi a few years previously, they pitched their tents outside the village on a plateau of hard sandy soil, which was admirably adapted for a resting-place during the wet season. The scenery around is simply described as that of an "ornamental park." There was a German living here who had belonged to the Austrian mission at Khartūm, but having abandoned the mission, he had set up as hunter, stonemason, and carpenter. His most paying occupation was, however, cutting cūrbashes or whips from the hides of hippopotami shot by himself. The tents having given way before the violence of the storm, sundry houses or huts, of which the traveller gives an amusing description, were purchased at the rate of ten piastres, or two shillings each!

"In the short space of about three hours I found myself the proprietor of an eligible freehold residence, situated upon an eminence in park-like grounds, commanding extensive and romantic views of the beautifully wooded valley of the Atbara, within a minute's walk of the neighbouring village of Sūfi, perfect immunity from all poor-rates, tithes, taxes, and other public burdens, not more than two thousand miles from a church" (the writer forgets the Abyssinian churches), "with the advantage of a post town at the easy distance of seventy leagues. The manor comprised the right of shooting throughout the parishes of Abyssinia and Sūdan, plentifully stocked with elephants, lions, rhinoceros, giraffes, buffaloes, hippopotami, leopards, and a great variety of antelopes, while the right of fishing extended through the Atbara and neighbouring rivers, that were well stocked with fish ranging from five to a hundred and fifty pounds, also with turtles and crocodiles."

But every beautiful picture has its drawback. Fever and flies, both the domestic fly, mosquitoes, and the insect fatal to animals, made their appearance with the rains; and added to these were not only the plague of boils, but also of watery vesicles, the irritation of which was intolerable. We have heard of a similar cutaneous disease allied to pemphigus and rupia, as occurring in the Punjaub and other fluviatile regions.

Notwithstanding the extreme richness of the soil in these regions, Sir S. W. Baker remarks that there is a serious drawback to cultivation on an extensive scale. In the month of June, at the commencement of the rains, the Arabs quit the country, and emigrate, with their vast herds of camels and cattle, to the desert at or beyond Güzurujup. At that time the country, barren in the drought, becomes a vivid green, and affords unlimited pasturage. This annual migration of Arabs and their flocks from the fertile districts is owing to two causes. The peculiar fly, which our traveller designates as the seroot (sīrūt), and which is about the size of a wasp, with yellow, black, and white rings on the body, appears in swarms at the commencement of the rains, and the virulence of their bite is fatal to both camels and cattle.

Another natural difficulty of the fertile country is the swelling of the rich loam in the great rainfall that continues for three months. The country being flat, the drainage is slow, and the rich mould, absorbing a large amount of water, swells into a mud so deep and adhesive, that travelling with animals becomes impossible. Those few Arabs who live by cultivation send off their flocks, while they remain to sow their crops of dhurra, a species of giant millet. This, with the rudest cultivation, is exceedingly productive, owing to the extreme richness of the soil. An idea of the return may be formed from the number of grains produced upon one head that was an average specimen, and from which four thousand eight hundred and forty-eight grains of corn were counted. Cotton is also grown in small quantities, sufficient for the supply of rough cotton cloth woven by the Arabs for their own use.

The Atbara flowed past Sūfi between cliffs of white sandstone, in which fine specimens of fossil trees were to be seen. The swollen torrent, rushing along at the rate of about five or six miles an hour, carried with it masses of timber, bamboo, and the wreck of forests brought down by the mountain floods of Abyssinia. Dead elephants were also frequently seen hurrying with the stream; these had been drowned in attempting to cross a too-powerful current. The appearance of such a prize was the signal for a rush of Arabs from a whole village into the rapid stream; swimming to intercept the carcase, they floated with it several miles down the river, before it could be secured, and ended by fighting for a division.

The appearance of the fly that drove the cattle from the country had an extraordinary effect upon the wild animals. The junction of the Settite with the Atbara formed an angle, which intercepted all wild animals travelling north to avoid the fly from the south. Thus herds of game were driven into a cul-de-sac, their retreat being cut off by the deep rivers. The east bank of the Atbara, opposite Sūfi, was uninhabited, as it was a portion of Abyssinia, the claim to which was contested by the Egyptians; thus it became a nucleus for game driven from the south to that point by the fly. Our traveller had a beautiful view of this disputed territory from his hut on the cliff, and he could see elephants, giraffes, and varieties of antelopes, without moving from his position. He counted upon one occasion no less than one hundred and fifty-four giraffes in one herd. The varieties of antelopes in these regions are very numerous. The superiority of the Germans as scientific explorers over most French and English travellers, is unquestionable. Not only is Von Wickerode's map of the regions, in part traversed by Sir S. W. Baker, much more detailed than the latter traveller's, but a list of the varieties of antelopes was furnished to him by Herr von Heuglin, which leaves little to be desired; and there is, or was quite recently, a German botanist dwelling at Adowa, who is not only acquainted with all the plants of Abyssinia, but is also intimate with its wildest and least accessible regions, such as the Baza, Lasta, and the alpine Samiyan.

There was little or no game, strange to say, on the western side of the river, or in what constitutes part of the old island of Meroë; but this is partly, but not altogether satisfactorily, accounted for by a statement made in the journal (p. 179) that the country for twelve hours' journey from Sūfi is thronged with Arabs during the dry season in that direction.

This is a noteworthy statement, and does not imply that the Ethiopic peninsula is quite such a desert as is represented on the maps. But as for the absence of large game, it would be more easily accounted for by the facilities which the open country would present to them for moving to the north at once, on the first appearance of their insect tormentor.

There was apparently no possibility of crossing the river, which was quite two hundred yards wide and about forty feet deep, with a tremendous current; but the daily temptation of herds of large game was too much for a sportsman; and, as necessity is the mother of invention, six inflated goat-skins were lashed to a bedstead or stretcher, a capacious English sponging bath was secured to the raft thus extemporised, and our traveller sat in it with his rifles, whilst four hippopotami hunters, who swam like fish, were harnessed by ropes, and towed him across like Neptune in his car. Neptune was, however, carried down half a mile, and whisked round in several whirlpools, before he was safely landed on the other side.

The success attained upon this occasion, however, and the number of giraffes, hartebeestes, and antelopes—as large as Alderney cows—that fell to the unerring rifle, led to a determination to try and move the whole establishment over to the disputed territory. This transit occupied two days, and the baggage being landed, "I committed," says our traveller, "my most precious valuables to the sponging-bath—*i.e.* Mrs. (Lady) Baker and my best rifles." There was no great danger in thus crossing, unless a crocodile should seize one of the inflated goat-skins, which happened a few days later near the same spot. One wonders how the hippopotami hunters, lashed to Neptune's car for a swim of half a mile, managed to escape. However, Lady Baker was conveyed safely across, and the party camped on a sandstone cliff, on what is unquestionably the Abyssinian side of the river, and soon began to make preparations for the exploration of the rivers of the latter country.

The wet season commenced in the middle of June, and the last rain fell on the 16th of September—that is to say, it lasted three months. The country was of a vivid green; the grass on the fertile table-lands about nine feet high; the Atbara was full. But from that day the river decreased, the intense sun began to dry up the earth, the grass lost its bright green colour, and gradually turned to the palest yellow; the north wind blew, and the torch, applied to the parched herbage, kindled a blaze that swept as wildfire throughout the country. The scene was changed, as though a pall of black velvet had covered the ground; the country was, however, opened, and they could travel. The Arab flocks returned; Beelzebub had departed; neither dew nor rain moistened the scorched soil, and the shade of a tree by day, and the starlit heaven by night, were their only roofs.

Our traveller points out a curious fact, that when the seroot-fly disappeared the giraffes also left the neighbourhood. Now the tsetse has been supposed by Livingstone to be the elephant-fly. Can the seroot be the giraffe-fly, and are there not others in Africa peculiar to some animals, but tormenting—if not fatal—to others? If so, there is still a future for these countries in the gradual expatriation or extirpation of certain wild animals. Our traveller enjoyed some angling at the end of the wet season that would have astonished old Izaak Walton—his captures being

chiefly fish of from thirty to forty pounds weight, sometimes eighty pounds. Some of the large fish belonged to the order of silures, or cat-fish, not much coveted by Europeans, but as rich as eels; others were more eatable, and the best, called by the natives "el baggar," or "the cow," from its great size, was a kind of perch, but it was found quite equal to trout. Monkeys and baboons appear to have been the only animals spared by our Abyssinian Nimrod, and the consequence was that they became so bold and intrusive that a native female attendant became afraid of being carried off—after the fashion of the country—and becoming the wife of an old baboon.

Before starting for the interior, an excursion was made to Katarif to engage men. This is described as but a miserable place, composed of the usual straw huts of the Arabs; but the market—Suk Abū Sinn—was well attended twice a week. There was a bazaar—some Greek traders—and Katarif being on the direct caravan route from Khartūm to Suakīm, it is a place of movement and commerce. Produce can be delivered from Katarif by camel, at Suakīm, at a charge of four shillings per hundred pounds.

On our travellers' return, by way of Wat al Najur, the country was found to be in a state of alarm, the panther king having made a foray. They were, however, safe at this village, whose sheikh paid tribute at once to the Egyptians and to Melek Nimmur. The Tukrūri negroes of Kallabat had also united with the Abyssinians against the Egyptians, so there was fighting going on all along the frontier. The Jiyalin (Jalyn Arabs) were also disaffected. It was the same with the Hamran Arabs, who, while they paid tribute to the Egyptians, really sided with the Abyssinians. The Basa were at war with everybody.

It was at Sūfi and Wat al Najur that our traveller first made acquaintance with the renowned sword-hunters of Abyssinia, the Hamran Arabs—the Red Men—but the hunters among whom are more especially known, as in the days of Bruce, by the epithet of aggageers, or "elephant-hunters." It was in company with a party of these Arabs and his Tukrūri negroes and other attendants, that our traveller followed the banks of the beautiful Settite river into the uninhabited frontier districts of Abyssinia and the Basa country. The "aggageers" said that they knew every nook and corner of the entire country as far as Melek Nimmur's and the Basa; but that in the latter country they must be prepared to fight. Our traveller pointed to his rifles, which he explained were odds against the Basa, who were without fire-arms. He afterwards, however, traversed the country in all directions, killing no end of elephants, rhinoceros, lions, buffaloes, boars, antelopes, and other large game, with many a moving incident, the perusal of which will well reward the reader; and he penetrated into the very heart of the Basa, half way between the Settite and the Khor-al-Gash. But although the redoubtable natives were occasionally seen, they were, he says, "as shy as wild animals, and we could not approach them."

The water of the Settite, or Takkazie, as it is called in its upper part, and which it and its tributaries will have to supply an invading force, is described as being beautifully clear, and, unlike the Atbara, its waters never fail. In this part of its course it flowed through a deep broken valley in a bed of white sandstone and a conglomerate of large pebbles.

The average width of the river was two hundred yards. At times it was contracted between frightful precipices; at others, it extended into wide reaches, and the banks were invariably clothed with trees, including the tamarind, and sometimes gigantic baobads, some of which measured nearly fifty feet in circumference.

The general character of the country was a rough unbroken valley of several miles in width, through which the river flowed, above which were the great flats of rich table-land, diversified with trees and jungles. After four days' march they arrived in the hilly country of the Basa. The highest mountain was Allah-tū-Kura, about six thousand feet from the base. Continuing along the margin of the river through this wild and beautiful country, they arrived at the great mountain range of Abyssinia, from whence issue the principal affluents of the Black Nile. The river now flowed through a gorge between deep cliffs. The hills and mountains were of basalt and granite, but in many places there were ranges of low hills formed entirely of white quartz, in some of which were small veins of galena.

It being the dry season, the trees throughout the country were as naked as those of England are during the winter, the intense heat having thoroughly denuded them of foliage; the only verdure was on the banks of the river. There, the tamarind and the evergreen and dense nabbūk afforded shade and shelter for the wild animals, who, in these otherwise uninhabited regions, were the possessors of the land. The finest gum-arabic, like balls of amber, glistened upon the stems of the thorny acacias. This valuable commodity was gathered by the antelopes, and by vast troops of the dog-faced baboon, who were the only gum-collectors. Hundreds of baboons might be seen together deliberately searching for the treasure; the mothers carrying their young upon their backs, and frequently boxing the urchins' ears for dismounting suddenly to snatch at a piece of gum that the parent coveted. The variety of game was most interesting; the river abounded in hippopotami, and of course in crocodiles, turtle, and fish, while the shore afforded elephants, giraffes, buffaloes, rhinoceros, lions, leopards, hyænas, ten varieties of antelopes, and small game, such as guinea-fowl and francolin—partridges in extraordinary numbers. All, except the elephant and giraffe, were collected in the vicinity of the river; those wary animals retreated to a great distance after drinking.

In this uninhabited country a human footprint on the sand was a cause of conjecture, and instinctively brought the rifle upon full-cock. It was the hunting-ground of the hostile Basa (hostile, probably, because persecuted by all around—Arabs, Egyptians, and Abyssinians), who, enemies to Abyssinians and Arabs, were, we are told, ridden down and sabred whenever met. The origin of this extraordinary tribe has never been explained; they differ entirely from the surrounding nations, and hold by force of arms their wild country, secure in their impregnable fastnesses among the mountains. Unlike both Arabs and Abyssinians, they are black, with woolly hair, and speak a totally distinct language. Although they cultivate to a certain extent, they live principally by the chase, being most dexterous hunters and trappers. The preservation of game is a tender subject in most countries, so that their quarrels with their neighbours, the Hamran Arabs, in the common hunting-ground had ended in no quarter being given on either side.

As the Tukrūri negroes settled in Kallabat, on their way to Mekka, so the Basa may be a tribe from Central Africa, which settled at some epoch unrecorded in history in the territory which they now occupy. "Being without fire-arms," our traveller says, "they had fled on hearing that I was in their country, as they supposed that my party was Egyptian for the purpose of slave-hunting." Not very complimentary to the Egyptian government, of which Sir S. W. Baker says elsewhere, it has not less than twenty thousand troops in the Sūdan provinces, including Dongola. Abyssinia, indeed, he declares, is entirely at the mercy of Egypt, which could slip swarms of Arabs, including the celebrated Hamrans, the Beni Amar, Hallungas, Hadanduwas, Shukariyas, and Dabainas, like greyhounds across the frontier. And for what? To make slaves of all the Christians of the country! But we doubt both the fidelity and the efficiency of these Arabs in a mountain warfare, unprovided as they are with fire-arms, unless supported by a large force of disciplined Turks. Sir S. W. Baker admits that the Egyptians subject nations solely to extend the numbers available to the capitation tax, not to improve or civilise the country, although the introduction of order and the protection given to property and life ensure this to a certain extent; but even the sheikh of the Tukrūris—a people who hate the Turks and Egyptians, although fanatical Mussulmans—replied to our traveller's demand for assistance in men and camels, that "this was Abyssinia, and the firman of the Viceroy of Egypt was a bad introduction, as the Egyptians forced them to pay tribute at the point of the bayonet, although they had no right to enter the country." It is true, however, that the said sheikh of Matammah, which merely means "chief town" of Kallabat—Jemma by name—had been placed in power by Theodorus in opposition to his brother Hamed, who, defeated and imprisoned by the Egyptians, had since sought their assistance (which they were only too happy to give) to replace him in his government. But recent events, as the mutiny of the troops at Kassala, the sullen allegiance of the Shukariya, and the general feeling of impatience common to all the frontier tribes under Egyptian taxation and conscription, attests that they would at once go over to a stronger and a less oppressive rule. The Hamran Arabs are Muhammadans, yet they do not scruple to eat wild-boar. One day after a feast upon a hog, our traveller asked his Mussulman companions what their faky, or minister, would say to their eating pork, as it was contrary to the Koran. "Oh!" they replied, "we have already consulted him. He says, 'Mind your Koran. If you have the book with you and no pig, don't eat pork; but if you have the pig and no book, eat the pig!"

Having explored the Settite, our travellers crossed to the river Rayān, another powerful torrent during the rains, rising in the mountains of Abyssinia, and tributary to the Settite; it was dry at this season, the bed having so rapid an inclination that it quickly runs out after the cessation of the rains in September. The junction with the Settite, the subject of an interesting illustration, is an extraordinary spot; the Rayān meets it with a great waterfall, which causes a frightful whirlpool, about four hundred yards in diameter, just below a narrow gorge, through which the Settite rushes close above the junction. How was this sketched when the Rayān was dry?

From this river our travellers crossed the country to the territory of the

unfortunate Melek Nimmur, the panther king. The story of his father's burning Ismael Pasha, Muhammed Pasha's son, is well told. The old panther king ruled at Shendy, close by the side of Meroë of old, and the Egyptians, who were at that time extending their rule in Sūdan, having arrived there, demanded tribute in kind, 1000 camels, 1000 cattle, 1000 slaves, and so on. The panther king supplied at once a thousand camel loads of straw, which he piled round the hut of the pasha, and setting fire to it during the night, the pasha perished in the flames with many of his people. Melek Nimmur then fled to Abyssinia, where he received from the king the portion of territory occupied by him at the time of our traveller's visit, but probably annexed by the Egyptians since the last of the panther kings was put to death by the ruler of Tigray.

Melek Nimmur provided the travellers with a guide to the rivers Salaam and Angarap, or, as the Arabs abbreviate most names, Angrab, two large torrents issuing from a chain of lofty mountains about twenty miles to the south. This splendid range of mountains has an average height of about five thousand feet, with peaks rising to about eight thousand, and towers, in fact, immediately over Gondar, the capital of Abyssinia, to the north-west. It is, indeed, surprising how close our travellers were to Abyssinia Proper without venturing to penetrate the country. It is perhaps lucky they did not do so, or we might never have had the welcome discovery of the Albert Nyanza, which, it is to be hoped, will some day be explored by a boating expedition.

Crossing a beautiful park-like country, well watered by perennial rivulets, they arrived at the Bahr Salaam; and, continuing up the stream, pitched their camp upon the precipitous cliffs above the pure stream at its junction with the river Angrab, of a precisely similar character. It is pleasant to read that now they were in Abyssinia Proper, although they had crossed no frontier town, that the country even here was the perfection of scenery, the clear rippling stream, a hundred feet below them, flowing now over pebbly shadows and between perpendicular cliffs in immensely deep silent pools, where the hippopotami dwelt in undisturbed security. The lofty Abyssinian range of mountains was apparently close to them; bold rocky hills, cliffs, and rough undulations, covered with splendid trees, formed the varied foreground. Unlike the parched country farther north, numerous rills trickled down the cliffs, the trees were green, and they felt the invigorating influence of the mountain range from which the waters came. Above the valley of the river Salaam was the usual fertile table-land that characterises this country. All was uninhabited; the distrust occasioned by continual strife between the Egyptians and Melek Nimmur had rendered this beautiful country, known as Armat-jūhū, a deserted wilderness.

Having spent some weeks in hunting and exploring the banks of the rivers Salaam and Angrab to the base of the high mountains whence they issue—a charming country, full of large game—our travellers cut across towards Guddabi, guided by a mountain, called Nabūt Guddabi, about fifty miles distant. Without either path or other guide, they were obliged to send a party with camels and a large supply of water in advance to search for water on the road. Their report was awaited, and then the main party followed. It turned out that the country was well watered with small but perennial streams: thus they had no difficulty in

travelling through what is described as the most lovely country that can be imagined, teeming with giraffes and antelopes, with a sprinkling of rhinoceros and elephants. They were well received by the Tukrūri sheikh at Guddabi, in a romantic dell between the mountains, and on the following day, after a march through forest, they reached the Atbara river. At this point it was merely about eighty yards wide, but a clear stream was running over its rocky bed; all of which, together with the larger supply from the Salaam and the Settite, was to be absorbed by the sand and evaporation before it could reach Güzurujup.

Crossing the river, they entered, if possible, a still more beautiful country under the mountain Ras al Fīl, or the "elephant's head." They were now in a hilly country of most fertile soil, well watered by many brooks. The whole of this neighbourhood, known as Kallabat or Gellabat, was well populated with Tukrūri, or negro settlers. Their matammah, or chief town, has been already described. Although there are many other matammahs, this is the best known. It is a poor place, but with considerable commerce, and some Europeans dwell there. The Tukrūris, having settled in the country, are claimed as subjects both by the Egyptians and the Abyssinians, and they enjoy the advantage of double protection by paying taxes on both sides. "The Turk," says Sir S. W. Baker, "has but one idea of government—extension of territory to increase the number of subjects, all of whom must be taxed—a most simple and practical idea that everybody must pay. The future never enters the head of a Turk. Good government of a population means oppression and taxation. The Arab's proverb, 'The grass never grows in the footprint of a Turk,' painfully expresses the desolation of Moslem progress. Thus, under this miserable rule, rich lands lie in wilderness, and a population that might become prosperous and civilised is paralysed by oppression."

Leaving Kallabat, they struck due west towards the river Rahad, the scene of Mr. Dufton's donkey pilgrimage. The bed of the river was, however, at this season of the year, dry, but with water in pools at intervals. The Dindhair, or Dendher, was found to be larger, and to contain more water. The banks were crowded by the Kunana Arabs with their flocks, and both the banks of the Rahad and Dindhair were cultivated at intervals, many permanent villages being surrounded by extensive tracts of dhurra, or giant millet, which sold at two shillings the hundredweight. Our travellers crossed the Rahad at the same point as Dufton—at the ferry of Abū Harraz, as the one calls it, Abū Harrar the other—and continuing along its banks, they reached that renowned and semi-civilised emporium of slaves and adventurers, yclept Khartūm.

THE DEEPDALE MYSTERY.

A NOVEL.

BY M. SULLIVAN.

PART THE TWELFTH.

I.

A STRANGE MEETING.

IT was growing late, and Mr. Renshaw proposed that Grace should give up all idea of seeing her mother until the next morning; she was quite worn out, he declared, and a night's rest would be absolutely necessary before she could encounter a new trial of her strength. But Grace's troubled heart refused to rest; she felt that her eyelids would not close, even for a moment, until she had made herself known to the fugitive, and quieted the fears that were now, probably, exciting and aggravating her malady. Dr. Litchfield's opinion was asked.

"I fully agree with Miss Ashton," he replied, "that it will be right for her to seek out her mother without further delay; it is quite likely that the uneasiness of mind from which she must now be suffering may make her worse, and it is also possible enough that she may get away from the thatcher's cottage, and that we may have great difficulty in finding her again."

After this last suggestion, Mr. Renshaw said no more in opposition to Grace's wish. A carriage belonging to the asylum was brought to the door, and she took her place in it. Mr. Renshaw evidently thought that he greatly contributed to clear away all difficulties from her path by going with her; she was not sorry, indeed, to have his company while driving through those lonely lanes, with the occurrence of the morning still before her mind, but she felt inclined to resent Dr. Litchfield's desire to accompany her also.

"My mother is as sane as any of us, except on that one point," she answered him. "I am not in the least degree afraid of her, if that is what you are thinking of, and I really believe that the sight of you will only distress her, and induce her to think that she is going to be brought back here."

He yielded to her wish, and only Mr. Renshaw went with her to Wallingford End. Once she suddenly ceased speaking, and trembled so violently as to alarm him; it was when one of the lamps of the carriage threw a sudden light upon a shed or barn in one of the fields by which they were passing; then the scene that she had gone through rose up before her with greater vividness than at the moment when it was actually enacted; the cruel hand tightened on her throat; life, with its warmth and colouring, swam away from her sight back into some dim region of cold forgetfulness; a dreadful thing pressed up to her, and prepared to bear her away with it—a thing called Nothingness, loss of

everything, even of being, and identity. Ah! she felt it all now, as she had not felt it at the time; then it was scarcely real to her, now she realised it with awful distinctness. She shuddered so that the carriage itself shook, and she raised her hands before her eyes, though *they* were closed, to shut out the horror that pressed upon her senses.

"God bless my soul!" Mr. Renshaw ejaculated, "I knew how it would be before we set out, starting off on a wild-goose chase at this time of night, after the poor child has been going through all this trouble, and ought to be in bed and asleep. She's taken ill, of course, and not a soul near to help her but me. Here, Grace, my dear, don't give way, I'll let one of the windows down, and you'll be better in a minute. I had a smelling-bottle in my pocket somewhere; I wonder where. Oh! here's a peppermint-lozenge; come, that's better than nothing. Open your mouth, my dear, and try——No, by Jove! it's a bad halfpenny that I put in there to keep it out of the way!"

The carriage was moving on, and Grace felt as if that ghastly terror were left behind them.

"I feel better now," she assured him. "It was only a kind of fright that came over me, and made me shiver so violently; even now I feel cold."

"Perhaps that's with having the window open," Mr. Renshaw suggested. "I'll pull it up. Do you know I come over very queer myself every now and then, to think that I am sitting here by you, because, you know, we have been thinking and speaking of you as dead, wearing mourning for you, too. I'm not much of a novel reader," he went on, meditatively, "but I don't suppose they put anything queerer into fiction than the things that happen to me now. First I go into mourning for a lady, and then I nearly kill her in the dark with a bad halfpenny, that feels like a peppermint-lozenge through my glove. Anything might be true after that!"

The carriage moved on and on through lonely country lanes, and stopped at last before the door of the thatcher's cottage. It was nearly ten o'clock, and the Yorkshire peasantry keep early hours, but a light was still burning in the little room in which Grace had parted from her mother. The sound of the wheels at once brought the woman whom she had seen in the morning to the door, and she stood there, candle in hand, while Mr. Renshaw and Grace got out of the carriage.

"Be you come to fetch her away?" she asked Grace.

"Yes. How has she been all day?"

"Well enough; a bit restless like, and seemin' to look out for you, but as quiet and gentle a lady in her talk as ere a one in Yorkshire. Here she bees," for Mrs. Ashton had been roused by the voices from a kind of half doze by the cottage fire. The fatigues of the past night had told upon her; she was looking worn and ill; but as Grace looked anxiously at her face with the light of the candle full upon it, she saw an expression there that woke in her heart a throb of tender pity; it was a *homeless* look, as of one who has been separated from all the home affections and sweet daily cares that compose the very soul and substance of a woman's life. She looked apprehensively at the carriage and at Mr. Renshaw, and clung with both her hands to Grace.

"You won't let them take me back *there?*" she pleaded.

"No; you are never going there again. You shall always live with me, if you will—you and I together."

She smiled at Grace a wan and faded kind of smile, but some gleam of her former beauty shone out with it.

"Together! Ah, that is what I have longed for so often. I have had pleasant hopes and dreams—we all have, in that place—but not one of us can ever share another's hopes. There, it is never together!"

Tears came into Grace's eyes; she turned to Mr. Renshaw, who was standing close by with the woman and her husband.

"Leave us alone," she said; "don't come in here until I call you."

She closed the door upon them, resenting in her heart a questioning and apprehensive glance that Mr. Renshaw directed towards her mother.

She took Mrs. Ashton's hand.

"You remember all that happened while you were in that place?" she asked. "You can recal your daily life there?"

"Yes, certainly I can. Why do you ask me?"

"Because some of us have lived two lives; you have for one. I want to know whether you can remember anything of your other life, can you?"

The idea of the two lives arrested Mrs. Ashton's attention.

"There was a fellow-prisoner of mine," she said, "who declared she could remember things that happened to her in a former existence, and she used to tell us about them; she was not in her right mind, you see."

"No. But try if you can recal anything that really did happen to you years ago. Can you remember yourself as a girl, pretty and admired? Can you remember being engaged, and married, and living in a house in London, one of a row of houses, with a balcony, and a small garden at the back? Can you remember having babies, and nursing them, and hushing them to sleep?"

Mrs. Ashton looked at her long and wistfully.

"My dear," she answered, "I have never forgotten the things that you speak of. I know very well that they all happened to me; only, when I try to recal them plainly, a cloud comes between me and them, and I see the things on *this* side of the cloud so much more distinctly. The evil designs of my enemies, and the rights that they have wrested from me, are all on this side, and I see them strongly enough, but that former life is dim and misty, though not forgotten."

"You remember your little children?" Grace asked again.

"Yes. How can I ever forget them? They died one after the other, and I fretted night after night. When I looked at the window it seemed to be all full of babies' faces; speaking about it seems to make me live through it all again. I found a remedy for fretting; I had found that out long before—a friend at school told me of it. I concealed it for a long time, but at last they discovered it, and took it from me. I remember one bitter fit of grief and self-upbraiding, for they said that it had caused my children's death, and then there comes a mist again. Why do you remind me of these things?"

"Because," Grace answered, firmly, "I was one of those little children.

They did not all die, for I lived to grow up—I and one other. We will not now speak of him. You love me already, and you are really and truly my mother. Will you take me—a reality, and a life with me, another reality—instead of the dreams that you say are bright and pleasant, but keep you always lonely?"

Mrs. Ashton understood her perfectly after the first throb of surprise and incredulity. She could not in her own mind identify Grace all at once with one of the little children that she remembered, and at times still mourned for; but she had begun to love her and to cling to her, a new feeling that tightened on her heart with Grace's assertion of the relationship between them. Her mind was not at that time sufficiently clear to suggest an inquiry into the proofs of Grace's identity; *that* came afterwards, as her recovery progressed, which it continued to do steadily under the influence of this new and real happiness. At this time she still clung to the old delusion.

"If you are really my daughter," she said, with a trembling voice, "and I feel—I believe you speak the truth—you should aid me by all means in your power to assert my rights, which are your rights also——"

She was proceeding, but Grace checked her.

"Mamma" (ah, the name was strange and sweet to her; she had dreamed, as mothers do, of the time when she should hear it from baby lips, and to her that time had never come)—"mamma, I can never share that hope of yours. I have neither part nor lot in the matter. I am only Grace Ashton, and if you are determined to be the Queen of the East, you separate yourself from me for ever. You called it a dream yourself. Will you choose the dream, or me?"

She moved a step or two backward. The cottage was so small that she now stood close to the door, her hand half raised towards the latch, and Mrs. Ashton felt as if she were about to vanish, and to leave her with nothing but the lonely splendour of the dream. She stretched out her hands imploringly.

"Don't leave me, don't! I would rather have you to love than have all the treasures of the East."

She was excited at the moment, and she unconsciously raised her voice a little, so that it became audible to those without, and Mr. Renshaw immediately blundered into the room, intent on aiding and protecting Grace. She was a little annoyed at his well-meant interference, but with her thinking was a very rapid process, aided by some species of intuition, and during the last few moments she had made up her mind as to the best method of treating her mother's malady. From this time forth she would never allude in any way to her one delusion, but would simply ignore it altogether, making life as bright and pleasant for her as possible, so that her position as Grace's mother should have more attractions for her than all the shadowy splendours that a diseased imagination had conjured up. She knew, without knowing how she knew it, that this would be a more effective means of cure than the clearest and most eloquent reasoning, and she began it at once.

"You can come in," she said to Mr. Renshaw, who had made an awkward plunge into the room without waiting for her permission. "I have not yet had time to go over the proofs of my identity, but mamma

is willing to take me on trust. Let me introduce her to you," with a smile; "she is Mrs. Arthur Ashton, my own dear mother, and this," turning to Mrs. Ashton, "is Mr. Renshaw, to whose kindness I have been very greatly indebted, as you will hear presently, when we have had a little more time together."

Now, it might naturally be supposed that this unfortunate lady, so lately the inmate of a lunatic asylum, would be in some degree confused, and uncertain what to say or do, on thus suddenly returning to the ways and usages of the outer world; and that Mr. Renshaw, who had been living in society while she was a prisoner, would pity her embarrassment and help her out of it. But exactly the reverse of this happened; Mrs. Ashton's face lighted up with pleasure as Grace spoke, and she took his hand gratefully, and thanked him with perfect ease and self-possession for the kindness of which her daughter had spoken; while Mr. Renshaw, quite uncertain as to the mode of speech most likely to please a lunatic, was trying to think of some coaxing and conciliatory phrase, and being confounded by a certain well-bred tranquillity of manner which he encountered, he floundered out of his soothing little speech, and into an explosive hope that she was quite well.

Grace was ungrateful enough to be well pleased at his discomfiture; she looked about for her mother's bonnet and out-door garments, thanked the cottagers for their kindness, and saw that they were thanked with something more substantial than words; and now they took their places in the carriage, and the coachman was ordered to drive to the Green Dragon, where they found accommodation for the night, and where Grace determined to remain as long as her evidence might be required, for she had as great a dread of Tyne Hall as her mother had of the lunatic asylum. When once she was at liberty to leave the neighbourhood, she would hide herself with her mother in some place where no friend or acquaintance of William Brooks' would ever be likely to find her out, until she heard that his marriage had taken place. Her cheek flamed at the recollection of Mr. Renshaw's unlucky suggestion, that the other lady would be expected to give him up to her, as to one who held a prior claim upon the easily consoled lover!

II.

JUSTICE BAFFLED.

THE police remained in possession of Tyne Hall, but their presence there was a mere form. With returning consciousness, Mrs. Ashton, the elder, remembered very distinctly all the circumstances that preceded her illness, and during the short remainder of her life she thought and spoke of herself as one who had been the victim of circumstances, whom the world might possibly misjudge, but who had desired with all her heart to act uprightly and for the best. She did not wish to see Grace, but she wished Grace to be told that she fully and freely forgave her, and hoped that her wicked personation of her deceased cousin would not be laid to her charge.

When it was intimated to her that her life might be prolonged for a

time, but that her illness could only have one ending, she received the news very calmly, and set to work with great earnestness to perform all the duties of religion, requesting that the curate of Basnet should visit her three times a week, and that a list of evangelical publications should be sent her from a tract society, from which she could select such works as she thought especially suitable for a person under her circumstances. "Cut off your Encumbrances; a treatise on Abraham's Method of Terminating his Connexion with Hagar," found especial favour in her eyes; the wisdom of the patriarch in ridding himself of a tie that was becoming inconvenient appearing to strike her very forcibly, no less than his generosity in supplying his discarded favourite with a bottle of water, as a handsome provision for her future life and maintenance. In her conversations with the curate, she usually spoke of herself as a penitent sinner, and accused herself in a general way of having lived too much for this world, and given too little time to the awful realities of the world to come.

The circumstances connected with her life at Basnet were very peculiar, she told him, and could not be judged by ordinary rules; and as he was a kind and simple-hearted man, anxious to believe the best of every one, he came to the conclusion that some form of mental disease had preceded her last attack, and had made her more or less unaccountable for her actions.

"You will be sure to tell my granddaughter," she said to him one day, "that I leave this world in perfect charity with her and with all mankind, and that I believe she will yet be brought to repentance for her wickedness in obliging me to act against the dictates of my own conscience, as I am afraid I did."

The curate answered her with some church formula, supposed to be consolatory to the dying, for the doctor was of opinion that her powers were failing rapidly, and before many days had elapsed she had sunk into a state of stupor, which continued until she died, about one month from the time of her paralytic attack.

A warrant had been made out against her in the usual form, but owing to the evidently fatal nature of her illness, no legal proceedings had been put in force, as far as she was concerned. The police had also failed to find the other two criminals, although they had traced Robert as far as London, which he had reached on the night of the same day on which Grace had finally escaped from him. But, beyond the terminus of the railway, nothing could be discovered respecting him, although the police announced with great confidence that they had found "a clue," at least once in every succeeding week, for the next two months, when some newer case turned up, to divert the public mind into another track.

About a fortnight after Grace's escape, the ministers of justice succeeded in finding out the lodging of Susan Marsh, as she was still called, and took great credit to themselves for their success. But they obtained nothing by their discovery except the honour and glory that might be supposed to follow it, for Mrs. Marsh had received some hint, probably from the daily papers, of the utter failure of the conspiracy, and had changed her place of abode in great haste, seeking a temporary refuge

with some old acquaintances, who had profited by her good fortune when she was "in luck," and were not unwilling to befriend her now that she was decidedly out of it.

And so Justice was baffled, and the blind divinity was obliged to return her sword, unsoiled, into its sheath. And although a rather enigmatical account of what had happened found its way into the newspapers, the particulars were not disclosed, Grace being exceedingly anxious to prevent publicity, and the prosecution being suppressed, at least for the time, by the impossibility of finding two of the criminals, and by the death of the third. But Grace's deposition was taken, and her identity was established by about twenty independent witnesses, who had been well acquainted with her and with her deceased cousin.

Her deposition need not be repeated here; it was very full and clear, and perfectly truthful, and it was considered that but little blame attached to her for the part she had been induced to take in the beginning of the conspiracy, and that the weakness into which she had been betrayed had been very fully atoned for. She was free to leave Basnet when she pleased, and Mr. Renshaw begged her to return with him to Deepdale, and even went the length of including her mother (whom he secretly dreaded) in the invitation. He should be "in a muddle of business," he told her, for a month at least; there would be so much to do in reference to Grace Meadows' property, and there would be Mr. Meadows to find out and communicate with, but Mrs. Renshaw would be delighted to see Grace again, and to talk over the late extraordinary events.

Grace shuddered at the idea of revisiting Deepdale, and she had also fully resolved to withhold her address, for some time to come, from friends and acquaintances of every degree. In about two or three years, she supposed, William Brooks' marriage would be sure to have taken place; possibly she might hear of it sooner, and when once she had heard of it she would renew her acquaintance with old friends, and perhaps by that time she might even bear to look again on Deepdale, but not now. She begged Mr. Renshaw to help her in asserting her right to the little property which had been left her by her father, and now it was discovered that Robert, as her natural heir, had claimed and appropriated it after her supposed death. The property that had been settled on her mother still remained to them, representing an income of about two hundred pounds a year, which was payable half-yearly, through the solicitors of the late Mr. Ashton, who acted as trustees, and on this Grace declared that they could manage to live very comfortably. She was an orderly and thrifty manager; she loved, as a true woman always does, the small cares of housekeeping, and the little home that she was planning, in some quiet country place, seemed a kind of haven to her, after the terrors of her life at Basnet. Mr. Renshaw tried to dissuade her from her resolve of secluding herself from her friends, it was such a very extraordinary step to take, and circumstances might arise that would make it highly desirable for her address to be known. Opportunities might be missed that she would afterwards regret, and so on. He was only thinking, in a vague kind of way, that money might be left to her, or that distant relatives might wish to know her, with testamentary intentions; but it seemed to Grace as if every word grazed the sore subject, as if he must

certainly mean that William Brooks might change his mind, and forsake his second love as soon as he knew that his first was still in existence. She answered firmly that her seclusion from her friends would only be for a time, perhaps for a very short time, but that she had fully resolved upon it; and, further, that the perfect quiet thus ensured would probably conduce to her mother's complete recovery. He had nothing to urge against such an argument as this, but he parted from her sorrowfully, and with many promises on her part that he and his wife should be the first to hear from her, when she resumed the pleasant intercourse with old friends that she wished, for a short time, to suspend.

Her anxious care and solicitude for her mother were already rewarded by Mrs. Ashton's evident progress towards recovery; her plan so far succeeded admirably; the real became more attractive than the unreal, and was, therefore, dwelt upon more constantly. By degrees, Grace told her mother such particulars of her past history as she thought there was no occasion for withholding; and though she could not feel sure that Mrs. Ashton was entirely cured of her delusion, it was still quite evident, from the whole tenor of her conversation, that she recognised the fact of her previous insanity, and that she knew the exciting cause of it, and blamed herself accordingly. Grace afterwards rejected the idea of retreating to a quiet country place; it struck her that they could more effectually lose themselves in the busy world of London, and she finally decided to take a small house, suited to their slender means, and situated at Bow, in the east of London; an unlikely spot for her tent to be pitched in, and therefore it was that she fixed upon it.

While she was moving into her new abode, wrestling with the disorder and confusion of the first few days, and gradually transforming her cottage into a refined and orderly home, John Renshaw was returning in all haste to Deepdale, to learn the truth of certain vague rumours that had reached him through an enigmatic paragraph in a newspaper. He had of late received no letters from home, because he had been abroad, and his letters had been addressed to Folkstone. He had intended to stay for some little time at Folkstone, and it was there that he had received William Brooks' letter from Paris, by which he understood very clearly that William had failed to discover any trace of the Ashtons abroad, and that disappointment and anxiety, following upon overwork, had greatly aggravated the illness from which he had previously been suffering. He knew that William was naturally clear-headed and business-like, and unless the mists of illness and of feverish anxiety had clouded his brain, he would not have been at all likely to seize as a clue, and follow up the incident mentioned in his letter; the name of Ashton being by no means uncommon in England, and the "season" being still at its height for autumn tourists. John felt perfectly certain that the Ashtons, who had left Paris for Bruges, were quite unconnected with the object of his friend's inquiry; indeed, his own private belief and opinion was that Grace Ashton did not escape from the fire at Deepdale, but perished there and then, and that the likeness to her handwriting was purely accidental, exaggerated, probably, by William's imagination. He was very uneasy about his friend, and he waited anxiously for a letter from Bruges, which never came. The letter, when it did come, was

from Rotterdam, the handwriting was unknown to him, and the contents were as follows:

"Sir,—I have obtained your name and present address from an English gentleman—Mr. William Brooks—whom I conclude to be a friend or relative of yours, and who is at present in this city, and appears to be suffering from some kind of fever, or illness of that nature. I am going on to Cologne with my wife and daughter, but I am anxious to do all in my power for a fellow-countryman under these circumstances, and obviously the best thing to be done in this case is to communicate with his friends. The manner in which I became acquainted with him is very singular, and you will probably understand his motive in following me here better than I can do. I am staying at the hotel of St. Lawrence, near the quay, having arrived here last night; and this morning I was told that an English gentleman, who declined to give his name, wished to see me. I desired that he should be shown up-stairs, and found that he was a young man, and quite unknown to me. On inquiring his business, he said that he had followed my party from Paris to Bruges, and then to Rotterdam, under a mistaken impression, induced by the similarity of my name to that of some person of whom he is in search. I could not but observe that his conversation was not quite coherent, and the ladies of my family, who came in while we were speaking together, were quicker than I was in attributing this to its right cause, and in perceiving that he was ill and suffering. He admitted that he had been overworked, and greatly harassed in mind, and he offered no resistance to our advice that he should remain for a time at the hotel, having, he said, no motive now for going elsewhere. He appeared to be completely prostrated by the disappointment of not having found in me the person whom he had expected to meet. I saw him about two hours afterwards, and he was then unmistakably ill, and wandering in mind. He speaks of some mystery that happened at a place called Deepdale, in which the lady or gentleman who bears my name was concerned; and sometimes he speaks of this person as dead, and sometimes as living. You will understand all this better than we do. I have called in medical advice, and we shall remain here until some friend of our fellow-countryman arrives. Hoping that his illness may not prove to be of a very serious nature,

"I remain, sir, sincerely yours,

"James Ashton."

Immediately after receiving this letter, John wrote a few lines to Mr. Brooks the elder, promising to go at once to Rotterdam and ascertain the exact truth about William's condition. He was considered at first to be dangerously ill; and, on hearing this report, Mr. Brooks also hastened to Rotterdam, and remained there for about three weeks; when he returned to London, William was recovering, almost in spite of himself, for he felt as if dying would be a kind of easy way of escape from the hopeless bewilderment that had fallen on his life. He was scarcely able, and by no means willing, to move from Rotterdam. It seemed to him that he should not care again to take his place in the world, and to give his attention to business; he felt that he should be perpetually haunted by the mystery which had eluded him, and that he should never be able

to feel the resignation which follows, sooner or later, the death of those we love, when that death is an undoubted fact. In vain John Renshaw argued with him that he had been mistaken in Grace's handwriting; he clung to his "delusion" with desperate tenacity, though with very little common sense on his side, or so it appeared to John.

Matters were in this state when an English newspaper arrived at Rotterdam, forwarded by Mr. Brooks, who had been puzzled to know what one particular paragraph could mean, and whether it could possibly refer to the Ashtons, late of Clifton-street West. In spite of every endeavour, and of the absence of a prosecution, it had been found impossible to keep all reference to the late events out of the local newspapers, and the London papers had copied from them.

John was puzzled too. He prudently concealed the newspaper, and made an excuse for returning to England, that he might inquire into the meaning of these obscure hints.

III.

THE LEGAL HEIR.

We turn now to a very poor and densely peopled parish in the far east of London. A large and handsome railway station, the terminus of one of the great lines, was, and still is, situated within the borders of the parish, but very few of the travellers penetrated farther into its dingy precincts, and for one who turned to the right after leaving the station gates, about forty or fifty turned Citywards, to the left. Those who adventurously walked in the opposite direction found at first a tolerably broad thoroughfare, with rather large and handsome shops on either side, the chief peculiarity being that all the articles displayed for sale were marked "Only," and that the fashions gradually retrograded as one walked on, so that time seemed to go back, like the sun-dial of the Hebrew king, and at the end of about half a mile you might believe that you were a year younger, judging, as geologists do, by the "period" to which the objects around you rightfully belonged. As you went farther and farther on, you would be more and more inclined to turn back, for the principal street grows more narrow, dirty, and poverty-stricken—eyes, ears, and nose are assailed at once, and the neighbourhood, especially after dark, becomes a dangerous one to unwary pedestrians. Openings on either side of that unsavoury highway lead into narrow courts and alleys, where always the very poor, sometimes the very bad, cluster together in great numbers. This story does not require us to look closely into such places as these; many of us have read the repugnant revelations of the home missionaries, and still more of us have sighed over the descriptions sent to the daily papers, in the time of epidemic sickness, by those who have had courage to trace the evil to its source; we have, therefore, some idea of what a very poor and thickly populated London district must be, although its worst features do not present themselves to the notice of the passer-by.

To this unpromising vineyard there had come, some three years before the events last recorded, a very zealous and active labourer, in the person of the Reverend Josiah Meadows, curate of St. Simon-in-the-East. His

past history, as far as it is connected with this story, may be very briefly told; his father had been the only son of a rich Australian merchant, and had been disinherited and estranged from his family, in consequence of having twice opposed and disappointed his parents, first in the vocation which he chose for himself, and finally in the marriage which he contracted. The inheritance, which would otherwise have been divided between himself and an only sister, descended, whole and entire, to the sister, who did not live to enjoy it long; and after her, to her daughter and only child, Grace Meadows Ashton.

The Reverend Josiah was aware, as we have seen, that he had relations living in London, a long way from his place of abode, but he considered that he was entirely separated from them, perhaps by two considerations, but certainly by one. They belonged to the world, and he belonged to the Church, by which name he did not intend to designate the Church of England, but that company of uncompromising believers who have existed in all ages, and have held fast to the sternest and most austere side of Christianity. This is the reason that he was always ready to give for not seeking any intercourse with his cousin and her relatives; but with this feeling another may have mingled, and a very natural one, for the principles of justice had been violated in the disposal of his grandfather's property, and whatever his father's faults might have been, it was manifestly unfair that one grandchild should be so richly dowered, and that the other should be left dependent upon his own exertions. Grace Meadows Ashton was not responsible for her grandfather's will, and riches are sad encumbrances in the straight and narrow path of Christian duty. No one was more ready to proclaim this fact than Josiah, and yet, such is the inconsistency of even the converted mind, that he did not feel grateful in his heart to old Mr. Meadows, who had taken care that his path at least should be unencumbered by the deceitfulness of riches. And it is certain that he never once obtruded the fact of his existence upon the Ashtons, or found his way so far west as Clifton-street.

He had entered upon his curacy with one simple and single motive, that of doing as much good as possible to the souls and bodies of the people under his charge, to their souls especially; the work that he laid out for himself was wearing and incessant, but nature had gifted him with a strong bodily frame, and with great powers of will and perseverance. His face was strongly marked, and was expressive, without being handsome; his intellectual powers were good, but had been cultivated in one direction only; he believed himself to have attained, through divine grace, to a higher region than any to which the disturbing influences of earthly passion can penetrate, the truth being, that circumstance and temperament had been so far in his favour as hitherto to prevent any such passion from shaking the religious serenity of his soul. He was canonised (on pure and Protestant principles) by the young ladies of his congregation, daughters, for the most part, of shopkeepers and warehousemen; they were ready to do anything for him, at all times and in all places, in season and out of season; he was so poor that they could scarcely be accused of husband-hunting, a charge that is often unfairly urged against the female devotee; young and frivolous women, once brought under his influence, were attracted to him by the kind of mag-

netism that the stronger mind exercises over the weaker, and were ready to give up their favourite pursuits, their small pomps and harmless vanities, to look upon the world through the eyes of their spiritual director, to regulate their faith by his doctrines, and their lives by his precepts. Josiah was anxious to utilise their devotion with as little delay as possible; he did not wish to have slippers worked for him; he discouraged all needless pampering of the flesh and adorning of the person, but he enlisted those skilled and willing fingers on behalf of the sick and destitute members of his flock. Funds were raised, materials were bought and begged, sewing meetings were organised, and the more immediate necessities of many a poor family were relieved in a surprisingly short time after Josiah had appeared upon the scene of action. And with the gift there came always a lecture on religious subjects, that was listened to with great patience, for the sake of the temporal benefit that accompanied it, and a tract or two—Josiah was great in tracts—that was always gratefully accepted, and in some few cases was read, or glanced at, after the departure of the donor. Many of these tracts related to questions of a purely ceremonial character, for the curate was rabidly opposed to the encroachments of a party which aimed, or was supposed to aim, at assimilating the practices of the English Church to those of Rome. Josiah's dislike to the elder form of Christianity, and his belief in the power and ubiquity of its agents, would be absolutely incredible to persons who have never observed the extraordinary power wielded by a single dominant idea over reason and common sense. Children, and people whose ideas on religious subjects were as unformed and rudimentary as those of children, were warned by him with almost ludicrous solemnity against the use of some trifling adjunct to public worship, that was supposed to be derived from the black depths of mediæval darkness; and the curate was said upon one occasion to have seized upon a small plaster figure, valued at about threepence, that ornamented the chimney-piece of a poor needlewoman in his district, and to have broken it to pieces in his own strong hands, as a bait put forth against the souls of men by the Scarlet Lady. The image upon which this iconoclast wasted so much vigour merely represented a female figure, rudely moulded, and about three inches high, with a great deal of drapery, one bare foot, and a shapeless bundle in its arms. He had no evidence that it had ever been intended to illustrate a sacred subject, except the evidence that springs, Minerva-like, from the brain of the enthusiast, full grown, and armed at all points.

The incumbent of the parish was old and infirm, and was not sorry to see that the work was very zealously and thoroughly performed by his subordinate; he had no small jealousies on the score of Josiah's popularity, although he sometimes hazarded a feeble joke on the extreme views of the curate, and declared that the Sunday scholars were not allowed to sit cross-legged, lest some Popish and symbolical meaning should be attached to the position. The services at St. Simon's were reduced to the lowest ebb of dreariness, chants were abolished, and a very little organ-playing of the simplest kind was just tolerated; the choir was put down, its members being only allowed to sing with the congregation, who were encouraged to join heartily in the responses and the singing, no matter whether they could sing or not. "If the

heart be in tune," Josiah would say, "the singing will be acceptable to God."

His heart appeared to be always in tune; he really enjoyed those long and dreary services—spiritual services he called them—in which there was scarcely anything to distract the attention by means of either ear or eye from the great purpose of public worship. He really liked the strict Sundays that he kept, and that he enforced unsparingly on his followers; his power of enduring fatigue was such as is only seen when a vigorous bodily frame is sustained by the mental energy of an enthusiast. "There will be plenty of time to rest in the grave," he used to say to such of his friends as urged him to rest from laborious and self-imposed duties.

Josiah lodged, as we have seen already, in the house of one Stephens, a sausage-maker, a man whose zeal for extreme and puritanic views was scarcely tempered with discretion, but one who was yet looked up to by a portion at least of the parish as a rigidly uncompromising Low Church-man. One morning Josiah found, on leaving his room, that Stephens was waiting to speak to him, with a roll of paper in his hand.

"What have you got there?" he asked; "anything for me?"

"Yes, sir, it's a proof from the 'Iroglyphical Society, and they wants to know whether you'll give 'em a horder for some picters like this for the hinfant schools."

"Let me look at it," Josiah answered. And Stephens unrolled the paper.

Now, the Hieroglyphical Society was organised for the praiseworthy purpose of supplying to young children, and to persons who cannot read, pictorial representations of various passages of Scripture. In this case, the verse which was illustrated referred to the last and worst of Job's afflictions, when he was smitten by Satan with boils. The patriarch was depicted as a very thin man, and his poverty was exemplified by the bone of a mutton-chop, very clean picked, and lying beside him on a broken pie-dish, the latter neatly painted in the willow pattern. The Prince of Darkness was represented in the human form, black and undraped, with his face to Job and his back to the spectator.

"I think that might be instructive," Josiah observed; "how many prints did we order last time?"

"Stop a minute, Mr. Meadows, sir," interrupted Stephens; "there's one thing as I was a-goin' to call your attention to. Satan ain't got no tail in that there picter."

"No," Josiah replied; "because, you see, he is represented in human form, and a tail would be out of character."

"Sir," Stephens solemnly began, "we haven't got to study natural history, but the c'ruptness of the human heart. Them children won't care tuppence for a devil wot ain't got no tail!"

"Do you think not?" Josiah asked, meditatively; "he looks a terrible being there, black and awful!"

"Lord bless you, sir, that's nothink. There's lots of singing fellows going about wot blacks themselves a-purpose, and even real black men is getting dreadful common. Why, at Exeter 'All it's as much as they can do to draw the people with a black man as used to be a cannibal, and shows the wery knife and fork wot he jointed a baby with, the night afore

he went to hear the missionary and got converted. Even that only fills the back seats, black men has got to be so common. The tail is the thing wot they can't come up to, and wot inspires religious sentiments."

"It is almost a pity that there should be such a feeling," Josiah observed; "but, as it does exist, it will be well, perhaps, to use it for the best. What had we better do about this print, Stephens?"

"Send 'em the c'rect length of the tail, sir, and tell 'em they must put it in."

"The correct length! Really, Stephens, the idea seems an absurd one. The length would depend on the perspective, you know, and on the eye of the artist."

"Not at all, sir. Once and a half the length of the body is c'rect and scriptural, with a fancy sting at the tip."

"A what?"

"A fancy sting, sir, accordin' to taste. The Wesleyans generally makes 'em arrow-shaped, and the Baptists prefers 'em on the fish-hook principle, with a barb at the end."

"Well, give an order for something suitable, and don't tell me any more about it. I cannot help thinking that it is a degrading way of treating the subject."

"Once and a half the length of the body," Stephens continued. "Short tails is atheistic in sentiment, and wery long 'uns is 'Igh Church. Some thinks the tuft is a better finish than the sting, and certainly there's Scripture for it, Satan being compared to a lion, wot has a tuft to his tail; but then, you see, tufts is only ornamental, and stings is useful, so they ought to have the preference. Use before ornament, is one of the school mottoes. There's the postman, sir; seven letters, and all for you!"

Josiah received many letters of one kind or another; very few that related to private friendship and affection, for he called the softer relations of life snares, that were apt to lure the Christian into the forbidden paths of ease and pleasure. He preferred to love the whole human race, and to hold himself ready at all times to serve and succour all who might be in need of him. But letters from anxious inquirers, letters from admiring hearers, letters from organisers and helpers of every kind of charitable work, poured in upon him at the rate of six or seven per day—from the advertising puff of the tradesman, who had "a really good and serviceable lot of blankets to dispose of, on very low terms, to a charitable society or clothing club," to the lamentation of the hairdresser's daughter over the way, that "she had sought justification by faith, but had failed to find assurance."

Josiah sat down before his desk to sort his morning letters, and to answer such of them as called for a reply, when he came to one the contents of which greatly startled and surprised him—so much so, that he once or twice rubbed his eyes, as if to make sure that he was quite awake, although his temperament was by no means a dreamy one. The letter was dated from Deepdale, in Derbyshire, and its contents were as follows:

"My dear Sir,—I must introduce myself to you as the senior trustee of the late Miss Grace Meadows Ashton, under the will of the late Mr.

George Meadows, the grandfather of the deceased young lady and of yourself. The will provides, that in case Grace Meadows Ashton should die unmarried, and under age, the whole of her property should revert to you, absolutely and unconditionally. The event for which provision is thus made happened at Deepdale sixteen months ago, through a deplorable accident, the particulars of which you will find fully related in the enclosed statements. But a fraud was so successfully practised by Robert Ashton, the cousin of the deceased, and afterwards by the elder Mrs. Ashton, that up to one month from the present date Grace Meadows Ashton was believed to be still alive, and the twin-sister of Robert Ashton was believed to have perished at Deepdale. The discovery of the fraud was made a month ago, and you would have been communicated with it at an earlier date but for the delay which was caused by some little difficulty in finding your address. The interest which is due to you for one year and four months has, I regret to say, been appropriated by Robert Ashton, and it is not at all likely that you will recover any portion of it. He has hitherto succeeded in evading the pursuit of justice, and is still at large, as well as a person known as Susan Marsh, who was implicated in the conspiracy. The elder Mrs. Ashton was struck by paralysis almost immediately after the failure of the conspiracy, and is no longer amenable to human law, her death having taken place two days ago. Grace Ashton, who was induced for a short time, and under peculiar circumstances, to personate her deceased cousin, has made a full deposition of all the facts, and no legal proceedings will be taken against her, as it is evident that she acted under undue influence, and was never a conspirator in any usual and reasonable sense of the word. There is sufficient evidence that she used every effort to do what she knew and felt to be right, as soon as her mind recovered its balance, and she fairly understood the circumstances in which she was placed, and you owe your present access of fortune to her unflinching conscientiousness. The enclosed papers will require to be filled up by you, and your presence will be necessary at the office of the late Mr. Ashton's solicitors at noon on the 15th instant, where the legal proofs of your identity will be taken, as a matter of form. I shall be in London at the time, and shall hope to meet you there.

"Remaining, my dear sir, with sincere congratulations,

"Faithfully yours,

"J. Renshaw."

Josiah read this letter through without any clear perception of the events to which it related, except the one great event—that the Australian property had reverted to him through the death of his unknown cousin, Grace Meadows Ashton, and that he was therefore a rich man, or about to become one. His first thought was one of pleasurable surprise and of gratitude to the Divine Giver of all good gifts, who had thus bestowed upon him the power of doing much good; for no man, however unworldly, undervalues money who has once worked hard among the ignorant and the destitute. Then he thought of his cousin, whom he had never known, and of her unexpected death, and he read the papers that were enclosed in the letter, and realised to himself the suddenness of her awful fate, thinking less of what her sufferings might have been than

of the short time for preparation that she must have had, if, indeed, any time had been accorded to her at all. He blamed himself then that he had never sought her out—that he had allowed his sinful pride to prevent him from visiting her, and speaking a word in season to this poor soul, standing, all unconsciously, on the brink of eternity, and occupied, perhaps, to the last with this world's poor and gaudy toys. This feeling of self-reproach clouded over the pleasure that he felt at his accession to wealth and fortune; he held that delightfully orthodox and Protestant belief in the inevitableness of a fate on which death has closed, which seals up every source of comfort to its adherents when separated by the curtain of eternity from those they have loved on earth, and does not allow them so much as to breathe a prayer on behalf of the departed.

Then he began to wonder what the part which Grace had played in the conspiracy could possibly be; and he set to work diligently to solve this problem by the aid of the depositions. Being naturally an intelligent man, he soon understood enough to make him absolve her from blame, and he began also to interest himself greatly in her singular history, and to perceive how very great his obligation to her must be. He wondered whether she was provided for, or whether the effect of the conspiracy had been to place all that belonged to her in the power of her unscrupulous brother. In that case he felt that he ought to provide for her himself, out of the fortune that she had wrested from these depredators and restored to him. And he thought how many new responsibilities would rest upon him now, and called himself "a steward," in the slang of the school to which he belonged. Finally, he read all his other letters, and wrote answers as if nothing particular had happened, advising the perplexed hairdresser's daughter to "persevere in the straight path of duty with a heart always directed heavenward," whatever such a phrase may be supposed to mean.

THE BURNING OF HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

(Destroyed on the Night of the 6th of December, 1867.)

BY NICHOLAS MICHELL.

The moon is walking tranquilly on high,
With silvery brow, and clear, unshrinking eye,
And each star-diamond brightly gems the sky.

Nought do they heed the mad, wild blaze below,
Rising with sea-like roar and furnace-glow,
As if the fiends their flames would heavenward throw.

Hark to the deafening shouts, the horses' bound,
Dragging swift engine-wheels with rattling sound,
Terror and wild confusion raging round!

The billowy smoke rolls out in stifling ire,
But, revelling grandly o'er that funeral pyre,
High springs through all the cone of crimson fire.

With bright distinctness, and with deadly glare,
Those jets of flame, loud hissing in the air,
Gleam on a myriad upturned faces there.

They show awe, dread, in straining eyes; they show
The bolder spirits rushing to and fro,
While helmets of the brave fire-battlers glow.

Tower, column, palace, blood-red flash to view,
And far St. Paul's gives back the crimson hue,
Its tall cross glittering 'gainst the sky of blue.

They fight the raging element—'tis vain,
Pleasure's fair temple yields, and still amain
Bound up the flames, sparks falling round like rain.

That told fire's triumph—that last blaze on high,
Veiling the moon, the stars, and through the sky,
For wide leagues round, proclaiming victory!*

There sank what skill and art, with plastic power,
Had raised by long, long toil—in one brief hour!
Man, great thy pride, yet weakness is thy dower.

Grand pile that was—now ashes—gazing here,
Where all that's lovely held its bright career,
Let Pleasure mourn, nor Taste withhold a tear.

Charr'd, blackened walls! what beauty spread its wings
O'er this famed spot, gay haunt of queens and kings!
What triumphs, feats of genius, memory brings!

Here shone the stars of Europe; music sweet
Followed a TAGLIONI's fairy feet:
LIND seemed a seraph dropped from Heaven's bright seat.

Here poured all music-notes in silver shower;
Here Pasta, Grisi, Mario, blazed their hour,
And Titiens thrilled the heart by passion's power.

I see the gay, the vast assemblage here,
Wealth, fashion, beauty, tier on shining tier,
While, deep and loud, applauses meet my ear.

Spirit of Song! now cast thy shrinking eye
On this sad wreck, then think of days gone by,
And in regret bend low thy head, and sigh.

Strong element, how terrible its ire!
Destroying Angel, Scourger, Fury dire!
Such its dread work, O ruthless, fearful fire!

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* In less than an hour from the discovery of the fire the immense roof of the building fell in, after which no flames arose to any very considerable height, the more combustible materials having been consumed.

ABOUT ONE'S FIRST NIGHT AT THE PLAY.

A RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW.

By Francis Jacox.

The first thing one thinks of in surveying the literature illustrative of one's first night at the play is, of course, Elia's Essay. Every point of detail in that narrative speaks home to every reader; and the elderly ones, like Elia himself, seem to shake off forty years from their shoulders as they read. How the afternoon had been wet, and the condition of the boy's going was that the rain should cease; with what a beating heart, therefore, he watched from the window the puddles, from the stillness of which he was taught to prognosticate the desired cessation; how well he remembered the last spurt, and the glee with which he ran to announce it; how the party went with pit-orders; with what longing expectancy he awaited the opening of the doors, while the cry of nonpareils greeted his ears; the breathless anticipations he endured when fairly inside, and gazing on the green curtain that veiled an elysium to his imagination, soon to be disclosed; how the orchestra lights at length arose, those "fair Auroras!"—once the bell sounded—it was to ring out once again—then the curtain drew up—Elia was not past six years old, and the play was Artaxerxes!—are not all these stages in the progress of the essay almost as fresh in the remembrance of each one of us, as his own, his very own, first night at the play?

After Charles Lamb's first experiences in play-going at the age of six or seven, there was an interval of some years, during his school-life (for at school all play-going was inhibited). Meanwhile, that old Artaxerxes evening had never done ringing in his fancy; and when he again entered by the pit-door, he expected the same feelings to come again with the same occasion. But we differ from ourselves less, he observes, at sixty and sixteen, than sixteen does from six. In that interval what had he not lost! At the first period he knew nothing, understood nothing, discriminated nothing. He felt all, loved all, wondered all. He had left the temple a devotee, and was returned a rationalist. The same things were there materially; but the emblem, the reference, was gone. "The green curtain was no longer a veil, drawn between two worlds, the unfolding of which was to bring back past ages to present a 'royal ghost,'—but a certain quantity of green baize, which was to separate the audience for a given time from certain of their fellow-men who were to come forward and pretend those parts. The lights—the orchestra lights—came up a clumsy machinery. The first ring, and the second ring, was now but a trick of the prompter's bell—which had been, like the note of the cuckoo, a phantom of a voice, no hand seen or guessed at which ministered to its warning. The actors were men and women painted."* Elia thought at the time the fault was in them. But long before he came to write that regretful retrospective essay, he knew it to be in himself, and the altera-

* Essays of Elia: My First Play, *passim*.

tions which those many centuries (of six short twelvemonths) had wrought in him.—The closing pages of this paper will recur to the disenchantment wrought by a few short years, in tarnishing the tinsel and making dim the finest gold-leaf of the stage, as beheld by eyes that, however young still, are getting the worse for wear. Before advancing to which dreary epoch of disillusion, some intermediate pages will serve to cite from a variety of quarters what is to be read in print of first impressions at one's first play.

In explanation of Schiller's neglect at school of the appointed classical studies, his English biographer tells us that he loved rather to meditate on the splendour of the Ludwigsburg theatre, which had inflamed his imagination when he first saw it in his ninth year, and had given shape and materials for many of his subsequent reveries.*

Cumberland records his being taken, "under proper convoy," from Westminster School, to see, "for the first time in my life," young Garrick in Lothario. "My attention was riveted to the scene. I have the spectacle even now, as it were, before my eyes."† And he places it before ours, in a graphic passage of critical merit.

All that George Colman the Younger tells us of the first play he ever saw acted, is, that it was in the playhouse on Richmond-green. He had forgotten the name of the piece; but it appears that he must have been initiated early in theatricals, from his having been in petticoats when he assisted at this representation. "Little did I then think," he remarks, "while witnessing this play, in the days of my innocence, that I should be guilty of writing so many."‡ There is no enthusiasm in his memory of the event—but neither was there any in George Colman's character.

Mrs. Piozzi records her being taken, at six years old, to see Quin act Cato, by the Duke and Duchess of Leeds,—and how she made him a formal curtsey,§ much to the amusement of the Duchess, and perhaps of the player. They sat in the stage-box, where little Miss kept on studying the part with all her might, "not at all distracted," she says, "by the lights or company, which they fancied would take my attention."‖

Mr. Peacock is probably relating something within his experience when he makes one of his characters refer to a first play, seen in days when ghosts were so popular, that the first question asked about any play was, Is there a ghost in it? The "Castle Spectre" had set this fashion; and this was the play in question. "The opening of the folding-doors disclosing the illuminated oratory; the extreme beauty of the actress who personated the ghost; the solemn music to which she moved slowly forward to give a silent blessing to her kneeling daughter; and the chorus of female voices chanting *Jubilate;* made an impression on me which no other scene of the kind has ever made."¶

It was at St. Malo that Chateaubriand saw his first play. A troop of

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* Carlyle's Life of Schiller, part i.

† Memoirs of Richard Cumberland, p. 59.

‡ Memoirs of the Colman Family, i. 295.

§ Mr. Quin had taught her to recite Satan's speech to the Sun, in "Paradise Lost."

‖ Autobiographical Memoirs of Mrs. Piozzi, i. 245.

¶ Gryll Grange, ch. xxxiv.

wandering comedians had just landed; and Chateaubriand's elder brother told him to get his hat, he was going to take him to the theatre. The boy's brain was in a whirlwind at the news. He had already seen puppets, and he fancied they would meet at the theatre with Punchinellos much finer than those of the street. With palpitating heart he reached a wooden building, in a deserted street of the town, and made his way through dark corridors, not without a certain feeling of terror: "A little door opens, and behold me, along with my brother, in a box half filled with people.

"The curtain was up, and the piece had commenced. The play was 'The Father of a Family.' I perceived two men who were walking on the stage, conversing, and on whom every eye was fixed. I took them for directors of the puppets, who were chatting in front of Madame d'Gigogne's cottage whilst waiting for the arrival of the public. I was only astonished that they spoke so loud about their affairs, and that they were listened to in silence. My stupefaction was redoubled when other personages made their appearance on the stage, and began to move their arms about and to weep, and when every person began to weep from the force of contagion. The curtain fell, without my having been able to comprehend anything of the matter." Chateaubriand frankly owns that before the next piece began—his brother having left him in the box, among strangers—he longed to be back again at his college. Such was the first impression he received of the art of Sophocles and Molière.*

The biographer of the Kemble family tells us how Master Betty, for his first play, was taken to see perfection, in the acting of Mrs. Siddons as Elvira; and how an enthusiasm so ardent was kindled in the boy's mind, that, while resolving to be an actor, he at the same time, and for some time after, "with the simplicity of a child, thought of nothing but Elvira;—he spoke only the speeches of Elvira;—the voice of Siddons perpetually sounded in his ear, and it was some time before his studies would take the direction even of his sex."†

Mathews was, by his own account, fourteen, before he saw his first play. "Oh the delights of that night!" The very curtain filled him with ecstatic anticipations; the scenery, the dresses, the feathers, the russet boots, the very smell of the theatre, that mixture of orange-peel and oil, the applause in which he joined so heartily as to bring all eyes and many remarks upon him, to the great scandal of his cicerone,—his friend Litchfield, of the Council-office,—filled his senses with delight. "From that night my mind was in a state of splendid irritation; I could scarcely walk the streets without offering 'my kingdom for a horse' to every pedestrian I met. At night I could not rest, Macbeth *did* murder sleep; and I recited Lear up three pair of stairs to a four-legged bedstead."‡ His excess of demonstrativeness reminds us of Mr. Thackeray's lively and life-like picture of his young friend Master Jones, who was not yet sophisticated by the world, in *his* demeanour at the play: his discovery of his schoolfellow Smith yonder in the pit, whose attention he attracted, as well as that of the house, by his incessant nodding, winking,

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* Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe, t. i.

† Boaden, Life of J. P. Kemble, ii. 395.

‡ Autobiography of Charles Mathews (the elder), ch. iv.

grinning, and telegraphing: and whenever anything in the play struck him as worthy of applause, Jones instantly made signals to Smith below, and shook his fist at him, as much as to say, "By Jove, old fellow, ain't it good? I say, Smith, isn't it *prime*, old boy?" He actually made remarks on his fingers to Master Smith during the performance.

"I confess he was one of the best parts of the night's entertainment to me. How Jones and Smith will talk about that play when they meet after holidays! And not only then will they remember it, but all their lives long. Why do you remember that play you saw thirty years ago, and forget the one over which you yawned last week? Ah, my brave little boy, I thought, in my heart: twenty years hence you will recollect this, and have forgotten many a better thing. You will have been in love twice or thrice by that time, and have forgotten it; you will have buried your wife, and forgotten her; you will have had ever so many friendships, and forgotten them. You and Smith won't care for each other, very probably: but you'll remember all the actors and the plot of the piece we are seeing."*

There are few things, Sir Walter Scott affirms, in a well-known passage, which those gifted with any degree of imagination recollect with a sense of more anxious and mysterious delight, than the first dramatic representation which they have witnessed. There is the unusual form of the house—as he goes on to depict the scene—filled with such groups of crowded spectators, themselves forming an extraordinary spectacle to the eye which has never witnessed it before, yet all intent upon that wide and mystic curtain whose dusky undulations permit us now and then to discern the momentary glitter of some gaudy form, or the spangles of some sandaled foot which trips lightly within; and there is the light, brilliant as that of day, and the music, which, in itself a treat sufficient in every other situation, our inexperience mistakes for the very play we came to witness. Leigh Hunt pictures in little the scene at large:

> Yes, I beheld the old accustomed sight,
> Pit, boxes, galleries; I was at "the play;"
> I saw uprise the stage's strange floor-day,
> And music tuning as in tune's despite;
> Childhood I saw, glad-faced, that squeezeth tight
> One's hand, while the rapt curtain soars away.†

But let Sir Walter describe this last sensation—the slow rise of the shadowy curtain, disclosing, as if by actual magic, "a new land, with woods, and mountains, and lakes lighted, it seems to us, by another sun, and inhabited by a race of beings different from ourselves, whose language is poetry, whose dress, demeanour, and sentiments seem something supernatural, and whose whole actions and discourse are calculated, not for the ordinary tone of every-day life, but to excite the stronger and more powerful faculties—to melt with sorrow—overpower with terror—astonish with the marvellous—or convulse with irresistible laughter." He goes on to show that the mixed feelings which perplex us between a sense that the scene is but a plaything, and an interest that ever and anon surprises us into a transient belief that what so strongly affects us cannot be

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* Sketches and Travels in London: A Night's Pleasure, § ii.
† Sonnets to the Author of "Ion," No. ii.

fictitious,—these "mixed and puzzling feelings, also, are exciting in the highest degree." And then he takes into account the bursts of applause, like distant thunder, and "the permission accorded to clap our little hands, and add our own scream of delight to a sound so commanding." A personal interest is added to his *résumé* when Sir Walter adds, "All this—and much—much more is fresh in our memory, although, when we felt these sensations, we looked on the stage which Garrick had not yet left. It is now a long while since, yet we have not passed many hours of such unmixed delight—and we still remember the sinking lights, the dispersing crowd, with the vain longings which we felt, that the music would again sound, the magic curtain once more arise, and the enchanting dream recommence; and the astonishment with which we looked upon the apathy of the elder part of our company, who, having the means, did not spend every evening in the theatre."*

In the fragmentary autobiography with which Sir Walter has at once charmed and tantalised the world, he declares the most delightful of his recollections of Bath—where the little lame boy lived about a year—to refer to his uncle Robert taking him to the theatre. "The play was 'As You Like It;' and the witchery of the whole scene is alive in my mind at this moment. I made, I believe, noise more than enough, and remember being so much scandalised at the quarrel between Orlando and his brother in the first scene, that I screamed out, 'A'n't they brothers?' "† (A few weeks' residence at home, he confesses, convinced him, who had till then been an only child in the house of his grandfather, that a quarrel between brothers was a very natural event.)

Washington Irving's earliest play-going was in his thirteenth year, to see "Speculation," a comedy in which the acting of Jefferson delighted him beyond measure.‡ Talfourd was denied by the conscientious scruples of friends an early acquaintance with plays; and he declares it would be idle to describe the transport with which, for the first time, he saw the curtain of Covent Garden Theatre raised for the representation of "Cato."§ William Etty, a veteran returned to his native York, records in his letters, among other simple pleasures in the old city, how he looked in "at half-price at the Old York Theatre," where he "saw as a child 'Jane Shore' and the 'Flitch of Bacon.' "‖—Hartley Coleridge, in a marginal note to the *London Magazine*, No. xxii., states "Town and Country" to have been his first play in London, 1807, then in the course of a successful run at Covent Garden; Kemble as Reuben Glenroy. Hartley retained little remembrance of it, only the peculiarity of Kemble's enunciation and his fine statue-like face took up their abode with him; and he was wonderfully pleased with a moon which a companion compared to a copper warming-pan. "Though I could make little either of its plot, its pathos, or its wit, and thought it neither so good nor so well acted as plays I had seen at Keswick [for this was not Hartley's first Play, pure and simple, but his first London one], the splendid house, the

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* *Quarterly Review*, April, 1826.—In this article Sir Walter Scott took a genial notice, *more suo*, of Boaden's Life of Kemble and of the Reminiscences of Michael Kelly.

† Autobiography, ch. i.

‡ Life and Letters of Washington Irving, ch. ii.

§ See Talfourd's Preface to "Ion."

‖ Life of W. Etty, R.A., ch. xx.

tiered boxes, the almost stupendous galleries, and the novelty of sliding scenes (which were not, however, so perfectly illusive as I expected London scenes to be), kept me as happy as wonder could make me, not a little vexed at the angry disgust expressed by the adults of my party. 'Mother Goose' succeeded, with Grimaldi in all his glory, and became my thought by day, my dream by night."* On another occasion he saw the "Wood Demon"—his account of which, as seen through the long vista of some seven or eight lustres, his brother, the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, thinks sufficiently curious to print, long as it is, in the Appendix to his Memoir of poor Hartley.

Doctor Dove, Southey's Dr. Dove, *The* Doctor, used to say he doubted whether Garrick and Mrs. Cibber could have affected him more in middle life than he was affected by the Punch of the Ingleton Company, and the wooden Jane Shore in Rowland Dixon's piece, as witnessed in his boyhood. For rude as were these performances (and nothing could possibly be ruder), the effect on infant minds was prodigious, from the accompanying sense of wonder, an emotion which the Doctor rightly declares to be of all others, at that time of life, the most delightful. "Here was miracle in any quantity to be seen for twopence, and be believed in for nothing. No matter how confined the theatre, how coarse and inartificial the scenery, or how miserable the properties; the mind supplied all that was wanting."† The village children, in a popular novel, are truthfully pictured haunting the Green after the Fair is over and the booths all gone —looking on the vestiges with feelings almost of veneration, as marking the great epoch of their lives. "For with them it was all magic; their eyes were kaleidoscopes in the production of dazzling and ever-varying images," until time should break up the illusion, and show them some day too ruthlessly, that all they had been admiring was made up but of shadows, and borrowed brightness, and bits of rubbish.‡ Geoffrey Crayon's Buckthorne has no words to describe his boyhood's rapture at a first fair—the humours of Punch, the feats of the equestrians, the magical tricks of the conjurors; but above all, the itinerant theatre, where a tragedy, pantomime, and farce, were all acted in the course of half an hour. "I have since seen many a play performed by the best actors in the world, but never have I derived half the delight from any that I did from this first representation." Even after he had come out from the play, he could not tear himself from the vicinity, but lingered gazing and wondering, and laughing at the performers as they exhibited their antics, or danced on a stage in front of the booth, to decoy a new set of spectators.§

When Anthony à Wood was five or six years old, he was "conveyed in a servant's arms" to the rooms of a canon of Christ Church,—from a mound in whose garden, looking into Fish-street, the boy saw the King, Queen, Prince Rupert, and a gallant train besides, riding down the said street into Christ Church great quadrangle—their majesties having come over to Oxford from Woodstock that day. "This was the first time he ever saw the said K. and queen," Anthony records in his Life, "and the

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* See the Rev. Derwent Coleridge's Memoir of his Brother, p. xxxix.
† The Doctor, ch. xxiii.
‡ Christopher Tadpole, ch. vii.
§ Tales of a Traveller: Buckthorne.

first time that he ever saw such a glorious traine as that was, which he would often talk of when he was a man."* The impression left by stage king and queen is often quite as vivid and lasting, nor is the spectator, in many cases, less apt to talk of it when he is a man.

Mr. Sala's essay, entitled First Fruits, comprises, among other primary experiences, a retrospective review of the first pair of trousers, and the first picture-book, the first oyster, and the first watch, the first love (primary of primaries), and the first baby; nor does it omit the first pawning, and the first death. But the first play makes up one of its most zestful paragraphs. The essayist dilates on the promise, the hope deferred, the saving clause of conditional fine weather; on the willing submission that evening, to the otherwise, and at any other time, detestable ordeal of washing, and combing, and being made straight. "We did not complain when the soap got into our eyes; we bore the scraping of the comb and the rasping of the brush without a murmur: we were going to the play, and we were happy." Then follows a realistic picture of the little boy dressed, of course, an hour too soon; drinking tea as a mere ceremony—for the tea might have been hay and hot water (not impossible), and the bread-and-butter might have been sawdust, for anything he could taste of it; sitting with petful impatience, trying on the first pair of white kid gloves, making sure that the theatre would be burnt down, or that papa would never come home from the office, or mamma would be prevented, by some special interference of malignant demons, from having her dress fastened, or that (to a positive certainty) a tremendous storm of hail, rain, sleet, and thunder, would burst out at the last moment, and end by sending the wistful expectant theatreless to bed. But these sombre apprehensions are dispelled. "We went to the play, and were happy. The sweet, dingy, shabby little country theatre, we declared, and believed to be, much larger than either Drury Lane or Covent Garden. . . . Dear narrow, uncomfortable, faded-cushioned, flea-haunted, single-tier of boxes! The green curtain, with a hole in it, through which a bright eye peeped. . . . The pit, with so few people in it; with the lady who sold apples and oranges sitting in a remote corner, like Pomona in the sulks. And the play when it did begin—stupid, badly acted, badly got up, as it very likely was. Our intense, fear-stricken admiration of the heroine, when she let her back hair down, and went mad, in blue. The buff boots of Runt, the manager. The funny man (there never was such a funny man) in a red scratch wig, who, when imprisoned in the deepest dungeon beneath the castle moat, sang a comic song about a leg of mutton." Nor be forgotten the essayist's mention of the sorry quadrille band in the orchestra, to child ears as scientifically melodious as though Costa had been conductor, Sivori first fiddle, Richardson flute, or Bottesini double bass. Nor the refreshment, administered by kind hands during the intervals of performance,—oranges and immemorial sponge-cakes; nor the admonitions to "sit up," the warnings not to "talk loud," in defiance of which, "seeing condonatory smiles on the faces of those we loved, we screamed outright with laughter, when the funny man, in the afterpiece, essaying to scale a first-floor front by means of a rope ladder, fell, ladder and all, to the ground." And so

* Life of Anthony à Wood, Aug. 29, 1636.

we come to the final fall of the green curtain, followed by an aromatic perfume of orange-peel and lamp-oil, and the mysterious appearance of ghostly brown holland draperies from the private boxes; to which add the process of shawling, cloaking, and going home, with a bonus of one or two or more primaries; for it was then "we for the first time 'sat up late,' and for the first time ever tasted sandwiches after midnight, or imbibed a sip, a very small sip, of hot something and water."*

That was going to the play, indeed, to Hazlitt, as he recals the time when he went twice a year, and had not been more than half a dozen times in his life;—even the idea that any one else in the house was going, was a sort of reflected enjoyment, and conjured up a lively anticipation of the scene. "I remember a Miss D., a maiden lady from Wales . . . . tantalised me greatly in this way, by talking all day of going to see Mrs. Siddons's 'airs and graces' at night in some favourite part; . . . . and how anxious and uneasy I became, lest she and her companion should not be in time to get good places—lest the curtain should draw up before they arrived—and lest I should lose one line or look in the intelligent report which I should hear the next morning."†—The firstlings of life are most precious, muses the authoress of "Dead Sea Fruit," when enumerating some of the things, and these the most beautiful of all things, which can never be renewed: the bloom on a butterfly's wing; the morning dew on a new-blown rose; our first view of the ocean; our first pantomime, "when all the fairies were fairies for ever, and when the imprudent consumption of the contents of a pewter quart measure in sight of the stage-box could not disenchant us with that elfin creature, Harlequin the graceful, faithful betrothed of Columbine the fair."‡

Let us watch young Alexander Oldworthy, in Mr. Charles Reade's novelet, making his way to town from Coventry by coach, more than a century ago; reaching London at four, at five he is in his first theatre. That sense of the beautiful, which belongs to genius, we read, makes him see beauty in the semicircular sweep of the glowing boxes; in gilt ornaments glorious with light, and, above all, in human beings gaily dressed, and radiant with expectation. "And all these things are beautiful; only gross, rustic senses cannot see it, and blunted town senses can see it no longer.

"Before the play began, music attached him on another side; and all combined with youth and novelty to raise him to a high key of intellectual enjoyment, and when the ample curtain rose slowly and majestically upon Mr. Otway's tragedy of 'Venice Preserved,' it was an era in this young life.—Poetry rose from the dead before his eyes this night. She lay no longer entombed in print. She floated around the scene, ethereal, but palpable. She breathed and burned in heroic shapes, and godlike tones, and looks of fire."§

So with Lord Lytton's Viola, when that young Italian is first taken by the Cardinal to his own box at the Opera. "Oh, how gloriously that

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* Dutch Pictures, ch. xx., First Fruits.
† Hazlitt's essay on the Letter-bell.
‡ John Marchmont's Legacy, ch. xxxiv.
§ Art: a Dramatic Tale, by Charles Reade.

life of the stage—that fairy world of music and song, dawned upon her! It was the only world that seemed to correspond with her strange childish thoughts. . . . Beautiful and true enthusiasm, rich with the promise of genius! Boy or man, thou wilt never be a poet, if thou hast not felt the ideal, the romance, the Calypso's isle that opened to thee, when for the first time the magic curtain was drawn aside, and let in the World of Poetry on the World of Prose!"*

First impressions at the play—this is a theme fiction loves to handle. Scott gives us young Roland Graeme at a village show—where the actors have but a greensward plot for a stage, and a hawthorn-bush for a green-room and tiring-house. But "as for the page, to whom the very idea of such an exhibition, simple as it was, was entirely new, he beheld it with the undiminished and ecstatic delight with which men of all ranks look for the first time on dramatic representations, and laughed, shouted, and clapped his hands as the performance proceeded."† Nigel Olifaunt, again, is initiated by Dalgarno into the privileges of London play-going, with this result—the play being Shakspeare's Richard III., and Burbage playing the King: "He felt all the magic of that sorcerer, who had displayed, within the paltry circle of a wooden booth, the long wars of York and Lancaster"—and when the Battle of Bosworth was over, so strongly were the ideas of reality and deception contending in young Nigel's imagination, that it was only with an effort he could overcome the illusion, "so strange did the proposal at first sound, when his companion declared King Richard should sup with them at the Mermaid."‡—Professor Wilson gives us Margaret Lyndsay coaxed by her gay young sailor-swain into going to see the "Tragedy of Douglas." "The house was a full one; and, before the curtain drew up, Margaret thought herself in a splendid dream. The lights—the music—the ladies in the boxes—the whole spirit of the place—so totally at variance with the small quiet room she had just left—all held her in a delighted delusion; and she scarcely thought herself in this world."§—Many and many a time had Moir's Mansie Wauch, Tailor in Dalkeith, heard talk of play-acting, and of players making themselves kings and queens, and saying a great many wonderful things; but never had he had an opportunity of making himself a witness to the truth of these hearsays, until, in middle life, Maister Glen induced him to go and see the strollers, at a shilling a-head, in Laird Wheatley's barn—determined to run the risk of Maister Wiggie, his minister's rebuke, for the transgression, hoping it would make no lasting impression on his mind, being for the first and only time. "Never, while I live and breathe, will I forget what we saw and heard that night; it just looks to me, by all the world, when I think on it, like a fairy dream." Even the orchestra enraptured him—consisting of two blind fiddlers, who played the bonniest ye ever heard. Wow, but the very music was worth a sixpence of itself.‖ For a parallel passage, take an excerpt from the souvenirs of Mr. Slick of Slickville: "Well, I never was to a theatre afore in all my life, for minister didn't approbate them

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* Zanoni, ch. i. † The Abbot, ch. xxvii.
‡ Fortunes of Nigel, ch. xii.
§ Trials of Margaret Lyndsay, ch. xv.
‖ Mansie Wauch, ch. xvii.

at no rate, and he wouldn't never let me go to 'em to Slickville. . . . Well, I must say it was a splendid sight, too. The house was chock full of company, all drest out to the very nines, and the lamps was as bright as day, and the music was splendid, that's a fact, for it was the black band of the militia (and them blacks have most elegant ears for music too, I *tell* you). . . . But what gave me the gapes was the scenes. . . . When the curtain drawed up, there was Genesee Falls as nateral as life, and the beautiful four-story grist-mills taken off as plain as anything. . . . It was all but rael, it was so like life. The action, too, was equal to the scenes; it was dreadful pretty, I do assure you."*—Theodore Hook has tried to depict, in the case of Welsted, the effect produced upon a well-informed and cultivated mind, sensitively alive to all the charms which simultaneously assailed him, by his first introduction to the interior of any theatre: how his breath stopped, and an exclamation not the most pious escaped him; how agonised he felt that even a breath should disturb the harmony with which his ears were filled; and, in fine, how when he fairly beheld the sea of heads about him, the glittering stage and all its gay accompaniments, he "actually sank on one of the benches, completely overpowered by his feelings."† The sight must have been too ridiculous for any *blasé* man about town, present there and then. Not but that the used-up *habitué* often eyes with envy the enthusiasm of inexperience at its first play. Colonel Hamley describes such an instance, where Fane is pictured at the strollers' exhibition, watching the audience, and musing on days gone by. "Cheerfulness and expectation prevailed; but the person among all the audience, whose feelings Fane envied most, was a sharp-looking little boy, in a red frock with black specks on it, and a magnificent feathered hat, who came in with his papa and brothers, and, being placed on his feet in the front row, gazed round him with intense delight. Fane remembered that the last time he had been in such a place he was about that age and size, and he knew that the scene was, to that little boy, the most charming spot on earth; that he had dreamt of it for two or three previous nights at least—that the smell of the footlights was a sweet savour in his nostrils, the noise in the gallery solemn music in his ears—the whole place paradise—and that he would watch the progress of the drama with breathless interest, and most uncriticising faith." There was an elder brother of his, too, it is added, who appeared, probably for the first time in his life, in Wellington boots and a shirt-collar, to his great pride and discomfort, and Fane guessed with considerable correctness that this youth would conceive an ardent and respectful passion for the lady who did Lydia Languish.‡—It is Covent Garden Theatre that young David Copperfield chooses, when resolved to go to the play, on his stay in town at the Golden Cross, where all along he is so painfully conscious of his youth; and from the back of a centre box he sees Julius Cæsar and the new Pantomime. The mingled reality and mystery of the whole show—as David describes his sensations—the influence upon him of the poetry, the lights, the music, the company, the smooth stupendous changes of glittering and brilliant scenery, were so

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* The Clockmaker, Third Series, ch. iii.
† Passion and Principle, ch. vi.
‡ Lady Lee's Widowhood, ch. xlix.

dazzling, and opened up such illimitable regions of delight, that when he came out into the rainy street, at midnight, he felt as if he had come from the clouds, where he had been leading a romantic life for ages, to a bawling, splashing, link-lighted, umbrella-struggling, hackney-coach-jostling, patten-clinking, muddy, miserable world.

But anon, when David is in the coffee-room of the Golden Cross, there enters Steerforth, who, the first greeting over, mentions that he has been "dozing and grumbling away at the play" that evening. "I have been at the play, too," says David. "At Covent Garden. What a delightful and magnificent entertainment, Steerforth!" Steerforth laughs heartily at this effusion, claps Davy on the back, calls him the freshest of daisies, and explains, "I have been at Covent Garden too, and there never was a more miserable business."* How soon, in nearly all of us, the Copperfield state of feeling merges in the Steerforth—and the glamour of illusion fades into the light of common day! In *nearly* all; for there occurs an exception, now and then, of the rare type exemplified in such a veteran as Mr. Fitzball—witness his "Thirty-five Years of a Dramatic Author's Life," of which, a quarterly reviewer observed, at the time of publication, that the author had still a childlike faith in the illusions of the stage, and wrote of them as if they were substantial verities. The best companion at a theatre, according to this critic, for all persons who have passed the age of belief, and entered upon that of doubt, is a novice in such matters, more especially if the novice be a schoolboy or a girl. "Then on the features of the uncritical spectator are reflected, as in a mirror, the emotions of wonder, sympathy, or mirth, which it is the privilege of acting to awaken, but which so soon vanish with use and repetition. Time seems, however, to have dealt more leniently with our author in this respect, and he writes with the profound earnestness of a lad in his teens of the magic wonders effected by a few yards of painted canvas, pulleys, ropes, gauzes, and gaslight." The child, it was added, in his case, had not been the father of the man, so much as the father of a series of children, all willing to be pleased, all overflowing with marvel, faith, and sympathy.—In salient contrast with him stands the instance of Theodore Hook, whose biographer directs attention to the remarkable revulsion of feeling which he manifested in after-life, as regards everything connected with his former pursuits, or which smelt of the stage lamps.

Swift says—or Pope†—"When I was young, I thought all the world, as well as myself, was wholly taken up in discoursing upon the last new play." When I was young—ah, woeful when! Ere I was old—ah, woeful ere! Disenchantment seems specially to wait with time on the enchantments of the stage.

As our judgment ripens, our imagination decays. We cannot, as Macaulay puts it, at once enjoy the flowers of the spring of life, and the fruits of the autumn, the pleasures of close investigation and those of agreeable error. "We cannot sit at once in the front of the stage and behind the scenes. We cannot be under the illusion of the spectacle,

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* David Copperfield, ch. xix.

† In the "Thoughts on Various Subjects," to which both contributed, without assigned distinction of authorship.

while we are watching the movements of the ropes and pulleys which dispose it."* When habit has blunted the earliest sensations of pleasure, the theatre nevertheless continues to be, in Scott's estimate, the favourite resort of the youth, who, though he recognises no longer the enchanted palace of his childhood, enjoys the more sober pleasure of becoming acquainted with the higher energies of human passion, the recondite intricacies and complications of human temper and disposition.† But the disenchantment of the first sensation becomes more and more complete. "En entrant au bal masqué, tout parait nouveau; mais il vient un moment où l'on peut dire à toute cette bigarrure: *Beau masque, je te connais!*"‡ And so the inevitable moment comes when middle age says the same thing to the illusions of the stage. Mr. Thackeray describes himself, when watching the delight of boyhood at a first, or a paulo-post-primary play, as resembling that *bon vivant* who envied the beggars staring into the cook-shop windows, and wishing he could be hungry: "I envied the boys, and wished I could laugh, very much."§ In one of his books of travel, having to describe the Golden Horn, Michael Angelo Titmarsh draws a characteristic simile from Drury Lane, such as we used to see it in our youth, he says, when to our sight the grand last pictures of the melodrama or pantomime were as magnificent as any objects of nature we have seen with maturer eyes—when fancy had all the bloom on her—when all the heroines who danced before the scene appeared as ravishing beauties, when there shone an unearthly splendour about Baker and Diddear—"and the sound of the bugles and fiddles, and the cheerful clang of the cymbals, as the scene unrolled, and the gorgeous procession meandered triumphantly through it, caused a thrill of pleasure, and awakened an innocent fulness of sensual enjoyment that is only given to boys."‖ Lives there the man with soul so dead, the same author elsewhere exclaims,—the being ever so *blasé* and travel-worn, who does not feel some shock and thrill even yet, just at that moment when "the bell (the dear and familiar bell of your youth) begins to tingle, and the curtain to rise, and the large shoes and ankles, the flesh-coloured leggings, the crumpled knees, the gorgeous robes and masks" are all revealed, of the actors ranged on the stage to shout the opening chorus?¶ Simple-hearted Colonel Newcome takes his nephews and nieces to Astley's—all children together—and laughs delighted at Mr. Merryman's jokes in the ring; and beholds the Battle of Waterloo with breathless interest. "As for Clive, he was in these matters much older than the grizzled old warrior, his father."** From Roundabout Papers and the like, how many more such illustrations might be cited, of the same author's very own! So might there be from the fictions and essays first and last of Lord Lytton. In the manner, for example, of his reflections in an early chapter of "Godolphin," on that hero's early susceptibility to the fascinations of the stage: "And oh! while yet we are young—while yet the dew lingers on the green leaf of spring . . . how deep and rich a transport it is to see, to feel, to hear Shakspeare's

* Miscellanies by Lord Macaulay: John Dryden.
† Scott's Miscellaneous Prose Works: Life of Kemble.
‡ Maximes de M. de Sainte-Beuve (in imitation of La Rochefoucauld).
§ Thackeray's Miscellanies, ii. 349.
‖ A Journey to Cairo, ch. vii.
¶ Sketches and Travels in London.
** The Newcomes, ch. xvi.

conceptions made *actual*, though all imperfectly, and only for an hour!"* And *then* in the manner of this bit of colloquy in a late chapter of the same book. "And the theatre—are you fond of it still?" "I still like it passably," answered Godolphin, "but the gloss is gone from the delusion. I am grown mournfully fastidious. I must have excellent acting—an excellent play. A slight fault—a slight deviation from nature—robs me of my content at the whole."†

As absolute in many cases is the sense of disenchantment as with Lysander's regard for Hermia, which, says he,

> Melted as doth the snow, seems to me now
> As the remembrance of an idle gawd,
> Which in my childhood I did dote upon.‡

FROM HAWAII TO ENGLAND BY A WESTWARD ROUTE.

BY BARRINGTON BEAVER, ESQ.

I HAD left home in search of adventures, and had promised to return with a supply to last me all my life, or not again to show my face in my paternal halls. In prosecution of my laudable intention, I had been for some time knocking about in the Gulf of Mexico, in the prairies of North America, among the defiles of the Rocky Mountains, through British Columbia and California, and latterly in the Pacific Ocean.

After leaving San Francisco we met with a terrific gale, which drove us a long way out of our course. We had a large amount of gold-dust and nuggets on board, the owners of which were especially nervous about their safe custody. No sooner had the gale ceased than we fell in with a suspicious-looking sail, which chased us for several days; and though we ultimately got clear of her, we were driven yet further out of our course for the Sandwich Islands, for which we were bound. The wind then came light, so that six more days passed away before Diamond Head, at the south-east end of Oalu (or Owhyhee, as it is also called), hove in sight. Although the third in point of size, it is the most important of the Sandwich group, on account partly of its fertility, and also because it contains the chief harbours and towns, and has become, therefore, the residence of the king. The town is called Honololu; the little island kingdom is known officially as that of Hawaii.

A short run among coral reefs, carefully marked by stakes, brought us safely into the land-locked harbour of Honololu, in front of a very respectably sized picturesque town, the houses of which are clustered thickly near the water, while pretty villas and cottages under shady trees spread over the adjoining plain and valley. The churches, the king's

* Godolphin, ch. viii. † Ibid., ch. lii.
‡ A Midsummer Night's Dream, Act IV. Sc. 1.

palace, the government courts and custom-houses, and the better class of private residences are built of coral rock quarried out of the reef. The cottages of the poorer classes of the natives are built of wood and rubbish with reeds.

There is a college, and there are schools, at Honolulu, six or eight good-sized churches, one of which is to be called the cathedral. There is a bishop, sent out under the auspices of the Bishop of Oxford, to establish an episcopal church on the model of the Church of England, as the Church of the country. Whether the bishop will succeed by the means he is taking to induce the inhabitants to pay more respect to religion than they at present do, and to become more moral than they at present are, is a question yet to be decided. I was there during Christmas, when a festival was held in the cathedral church, which was richly decorated with flowers. Crowns, circles, and the initials I.H.S. abounded. The king lent his silver candelabra, so that when night came, and the time for the midnight service arrived, the church was one blaze of light. The Litany was first softly chanted by a choir of twenty in surplices; the clergy walked in procession round the church singing *Adeste Fideles*. A choral communion service was then performed. At the consecration of the elements the communicants sang on their knees, "Thee we adore, O hidden Saviour" (Hymns Ancient and Modern). When the service was over, the clergy, with the king surrounded by torch-bearers, paraded the town singing carols, while bonfires were lighted on the hills; the populace now shouted loudly in honour of the king and queen. Then another carol was sung, and some champagne punch was drunk by the bishop and his friends, who then sang the National Anthem, indulged in more hurrahs, and went to bed.

Whether this proceeding was calculated to teach the natives a spiritual religion, to worship God as God desires to be worshipped, or to lead them back to semi-idolatry, I must leave to those who know what human nature is, to say. One thing I have to remark, that the Bishop of Honolulu, and those who have sent him out, accord but a scant amount of credit to the Presbyterian, Independent, and Baptist missionaries who have toiled for many years in those islands, and have been the instruments of bringing them out of a dark state of heathenism and barbarity to a knowledge of the truths of Christianity, and to an advanced state of civilisation. Considering the evil influence to which the inhabitants are subjected from the crews of whalers, and even of men-of-war which visit the islands, and the known difficulty of eradicating bad habits, it is surprising that Christianity should have become universally established under any form, and that a very large part of the population should have been taught to read and write. To the early missionaries also belong the honour of having translated the Bible into the tongue of the people, and without that all progress in religious knowledge would have been impossible. However, I will not further enlarge on the subject.

From what I have said, it will be understood that the island nation is in an advanced state of civilisation, the government is constitutional, and consists of king, lords, and commons. Taking all things into consideration, the islands are very well governed. A considerable number of English, Americans, and other foreigners are settled in the islands, chiefly in Honolulu, and the time may possibly come that very few of the pure

race of the aborigines will remain. The group consists of four large islands and several small ones. The largest is Hawaii, from which the group takes its name.

It contains two lofty mountains, Manna Loa and Manna Kea, and the still active volcano of Kilanea, the scenery being wild and grand in the extreme.

If I had to choose a spot on the surface of the globe from which I was never again to move, I am not at all certain that I should not select one of the many lovely ones to be found within the circuit of the kingdom of Hawaii.

I had the honour of making the acquaintance of a Scotch gentleman, who, I concluded, was of my opinion, for he resided there for the last twenty years of his life, and, having become prime minister, assisted to rule the kingdom with great judgment and honesty.

My friend and I spent most of our time in making interesting excursions about the different islands. We returned from a trip to the top of the volcano of Kilanea, which I must take another opportunity of describing, when we found the *Barana* about ready for sea.

Our voyage to Japan, though long, was literally without incident. We saw an occasional whale and caught a few flying-fish, sighted a distant island, spoke to one or two vessels, and ate and drank much as usual, till we dropped anchor off Yokahama, the newly built trading town or port of Yedo, and about ten miles from the capital. The houses are all low, and of wood, painted and ornamented in the usual tea-tray fashion. On every side the country was covered with garden-terraces and neat cottages, showing the density of the population and the industry of the people.

The merchants who reside at Yokahama were very ready to show their goods, and curious productions they were if looked at in a utilitarian point of view. They consisted chiefly of choice lac-wares, fine painted porcelain, wonderful embroidery, silks, crapes, and numberless indescribable things. The Japanese are neat-handed workmen, and their houses are curious specimens of carpentering and skill.

We afterwards went up to Yedo, the capital, which stands on the side of a deep indentation in the middle of the great island of Nipon. Though the town covers a space fully twelve miles long and ten deep, very little of it is seen from without, as it contains no lofty towers or high buildings rising above the trees, which here and there appear around it. After dark, however, the whole shore for miles and miles appeared illuminated, showing the vast number of houses built along it. I have scarcely space to give even an outline sketch of Yedo. The streets are long and narrow, but as all the houses are open in front, guarded only by trellis-work, it is very amusing walking along them; some of the shops are large and handsome, as in London. As I said before, a Japan tea-tray or china jar will give a better notion of the buildings and the inhabitants than any verbal description. Their temples are richly ornamented with carved work and hangings and idols, which are usually ugly monsters. They do not look on the temples as in any degree sacred, and when any foreigners of distinction come to the country they are always lodged in them. They are divided by substantial screens into numerous compartments, and make very comfortable dwellings.

However, I see that I must reserve my notes on Japan for another

occasion. We got molested more than once in our rambles, and on one occasion very nearly cut into mincemeat; but notwithstanding that, though not enlightened or intellectual, the Japanese are really a very civilised people.

We were preparing to sail once more in the stout brig for Tien-tsin, the port of Pekin, on the river Peiho, on our way, through Tartary and Russia, to the shores of Old England. We did not leave Japan with any deep regret.

Tien-tsin is a place of great trade. From thence a boat conveyed us up the river to within a dozen miles of Pekin. Pekin has walls (there is no doubt of it) high, massive, and in good repair; the streets are wide, but in bad repair, and the inns dirty in the extreme. The public eating-houses are, however, very good, and we were diverted with the characters we met there. The most amusing were the students at the Pekin college, who come up from all parts of the empire. They were funny-looking fellows with their pigtails and pigs' eyes, and, though they might have had a wonderful amount of knowledge in their heads, they were very unlike undergraduates of Oxford or Cambridge. We visited the magnificent temple of Heaven and the palace of the emperor, and, indeed, all the lions of Pekin. The Chinese are not a religious people—at least, they are only so when they are in a fright—so they allow their temples to fall into decay, as, indeed, they do most of their public buildings. Christian missionaries, however, are at work among them, and though their progress is slow, they do make progress, which is something. I have an idea the Chinese will throw off their old faith from finding how utterly useless it is, as the king and people of the Sandwich Islands did some sixty or seventy years ago, and they will then be ready to assume a purer one. We had got our passports for Mongolia, and had ordered our litters and mules to proceed to Chan-kia-Kow, the chief border-town, close to the great walls of China. The scenery was rough and hilly, or rather mountainous, and totally unlike that on the north of China.

We took some time while in Chan-kia-Kow to make our arrangements for travelling through Mongolia. We hired a cart apiece to travel in by night and a pony by day, while camels carried our luggage on their backs. Our stopping-places were selected with respect to water, and near each we generally found a Mongol yourt, or encampment. Yourt is the name of a permanent tent in which a Mongol family resides. It consists of a light framework of a circular form covered with felt, and with a conical roof. A hole in the apex lets out the smoke of the argol fires, which is horses' or cows' dung dried in the sun, and to be picked up throughout the desert. At night, when the fire goes out, the hole is closed to keep in the warmth. These tents can easily be taken to pieces and conveyed on the backs of camels to fresh pastures. We found the Mongols very civil, provided we behaved towards them with that attention which they considered their due. Our only fuel in the desert was the argol, or dung, but it served the purpose very well. After several days' travelling through the wildest of wild deserts we arrived at Urga, or Kuren, as the Mongols call the town. The Russians have already considerable influence at this place, which they are busily employed in extending still farther east. The country now becomes mountainous and

rugged, and we once more were able to procure wood for our fires. Our camels still, however, continued with us, not seeming to mind the roughness of the road, and enjoying the cold, which to us was very disagreeable. Our journey from Pekin lasted thirty-four days, when at last we reached Kiachta, the frontier town of the Russian empire, seven hundred and eighty miles from Pekin. Russian officials, however, with relays of horses, do the distance in twelve days. We now took to a more civilised style of conveyance—a Russian tarantas, which is a four-wheeled carriage on poles, which rest across the two axletrees. A hood comes well forward, while an apron reaches high up, and meets curtains let down in front. Thus the carriage can be closed in and made tolerably comfortable in cold weather.

We had three horses, one in the shafts with a high arch over his neck, to which a belt is suspended, and one on either side.

We proposed travelling night and day, so as to get over the journey as rapidly as possible. On reaching the shore of Lake Baikal, we embarked on board a steamer of a somewhat primitive build, which might appropriately have been called *Caliban*, in contradistinction of her Majesty's ship *Fairy*.

We were sixteen hours crossing diagonally a distance of seventy miles. The lake is more than a hundred miles long, and about thirty wide, with mountain scenery on either side. A morning's drive of forty miles took us to Tekutsk, the capital of Eastern Siberia. All our former notions of Siberia were put to flight when we found ourselves in a remarkably handsome town of large houses, containing twenty-three thousand inhabitants, enjoying every possible luxury, while their numbers are increased in the winter by some four thousand miners from the gold-diggings, who spend their earnings much as those from Cariboo do when they get down to Victoria.

One of our stages was from Tomsk to Omsk, remarkable rather from the shortness of the two names than from anything else. Winter was fast overtaking us, and it had become bitterly cold. We were thankful to get to Ekatesburg, the very handsome border town of Russia, on the river Techet, near the Ural Mountains. The snow had now come down so thickly that we took to sleighs, and slid rapidly over the smooth ground—a perfect luxury compared to the bumpings to which we had so long been subjected. From Teazan we sleighed up to the Volga at a rapid rate over the smooth ice to Nijni Novgorod, an important place, where, in summer, a large fair is held. Here we found the terminus of the great Russian railway, three hundred miles from Moscow. We bestowed ourselves in a luxurious sleeping-carriage at four o'clock in the afternoon, and arrived at Moscow at seven the next morning. With the same ease we glided on to St. Petersburg; we were just in time to catch the last steam-boat which was to leave Cronstadt for that season, and were nearly indeed frozen up as it was. It was Christmas-eve before we reached home, and very glad we were to find ourselves safe again in old England.

THE ARLINGTONS:

SKETCHES FROM MODERN LIFE.

By a Looker-on.

PART THE SIXTH.

I.

A DISAGREEABLE CONFESSION.

Mr. and Mrs. Arlington had taken their places in the library—the temporary judgment-hall. Mrs. Arlington sat with her back to the window, in a well-stuffed arm-chair. Her husband sat at a little distance from her, leaning one arm on the table, and supporting his head by it. The view from the window was soft and placid—an emerald green lawn, bordered by beautiful trees, their branches gracefully waving in the slightly sighing wind. It was a peaceful scene; but the eyes that might have looked on it with pleasure were dimmed and darkened by care, anxiety, and inward passion.

A silence as deep as that of the grave reigned in the room, when a low knock was heard at the door, and, opening slowly, it admitted the erring son. He walked forward, looking exceedingly pale.

"Sit down," said his father, in a quiet voice.

Silvester sat down.

"Your mother and I," said Mr. Arlington, clearing his throat and stammering a little—"your mother and I wish to have this mystery explained to us."

"Yes, sir," said Silvester, looking up and looking down, and scarcely venturing to glance at his mother's irate countenance. He longed to speak to his father alone, but he dared not further offend his mother by asking her to withdraw. He sat like a dumb person.

"Speak!" cried his mother, in a voice of sharp command.

"You know all I have to say," replied Silvester, in a sharp tone also. "I am married."

"Married! Yes; but even if you have performed this grand feat, who is the lady you have introduced into our family?"

Mrs. Arlington laid a sneering stress on the word *lady*.

"Her name was Evans."

"Evans—humph! That is scarcely enough of information to vouchsafe your parents, sir."

"I fear you have married beneath you, my son," said his father, sorrowfully.

"Father, I own it, and I deeply lament my folly."

"Is she a woman of disreputable character?" asked Mr. Arlington, in a trembling voice. "Surely you would not bring among your sisters a—a——"

The good man could not force himself to pronounce the word that rose to his lips."

"No, dear father—no!" exclaimed Silvester, eagerly, "she is not vicious, only—only ignorant and uneducated."

"*Only* ignorant and uneducated, indeed! and, I suppose, vulgar and low!" cried his mother, with a face full of disgust.

"Nelly, my dear," said Mr. Arlington, "it would be better to let Silvester tell his story at once, and without interruptions or remarks; we shall never get through it else."

Then turning to his son, he told him that it was of no use to preserve an obdurate silence, that he had better speak the truth, and the whole truth, so that his mother and himself might be enabled to determine what they were to do and to say. His ill-arranged manner of arriving, and the sudden appearance of his female companion, would naturally create much curiosity and suspicion in the house, and something must be said, and said soon.

"Do not promise to forgive him, Arlington!" cried Mrs. Arlington. "We must know what he has done before any pardon is extended to him."

"Where did you meet the young person who has accompanied you here? And what induced you to make a clandestine marriage?" asked Mr. Arlington, calmly.

"Folly, my dear father, and being led on by the example of others, and an unfortunate spirit of rivalry in the first place."

"Rivalry!" echoed his father. "Was the young lady such a prize that you had many rivals?"

"She was very much admired at Cambridge, where she lived. Digby—Lord Rupert Digby—and Pigott, both chums of mine, were crazy about her, and constantly running after her. She had a pretty cousin, who used to walk with her, and I assure you more than half a dozen young men were always at their heels. Pigott will be worth twenty thousand a year when he is five-and-twenty. He made desperate love to Hetty, but she preferred me. The mother wanted her to take up only with Pigott because of his fortune, and throw me overboard, but she would not."

"You gave handsome presents, I suppose?" said his mother, looking daggers at Silvester.

"I made a few presents, certainly; but not any of much consequence."

"And the rich Mr. Pigott?"

"He was very stingy; but he promised to do a great deal when he came into his fortune."

"Did he intend to marry the young person?" asked Mr. Arlington.

"I don't know. One day he would swear that he would marry her, the next day he would ridicule the idea. Lord Rupert said that Pigott was only manœuvring to get me out of his way."

"And you were blockhead enough to believe him. You did not see that they were both making a fool of you?" cried the angry mother.

"I know that Pigott asked her to marry him," said Silvester, doggedly, "and wished her to go to Scarborough, to be married there."

"I wonder he did not propose Gretna Green," said his mother, sneeringly. "But go on. I conclude it was to cut out your friends that you carried off the beautiful Helen."

"No, mother," replied Silvester, raising his head, and looking her full

in the face. "It was *your* bitter letter to me which exasperated me, and my father's letter of inquiry into my conduct to one of the nobs of the college, that mortified and annoyed me. The old ass of a professor chose to make a scene about it; he called me up, and lectured me before some eight or ten of our fellows; attacked me about keeping bad company, devoting my time and thoughts to ruining silly girls, and uttered some big threats, which, though I knew they were empty ones, provoked me extremely. It was a very unwarrantable proceeding, especially as Digby and Pigott, and some others who did the same thing as I did, went scot free, and were laughing in their sleeves at me during the agreeable lecture. I could have punched the old fool's head for him, he made me so savage. And when I went a day or two after to see Hetty, I found her roaring and crying, and her mother came down upon me as sharp as a razor, and told me I had ruined her daughter's reputation and all her prospects in life, and that the son of a rich farmer, to whom she was engaged, had just called to give her up on account of my attentions to her."

Silvester stopped for a moment, as he wiped away the cold perspiration that was standing on his brow; and then, in a sort of desperate manner, but in a lower and more agitated voice, continued:

"I fancied there was nothing but disgrace before me; I was angry and mortified, and yet sorry for the poor girl, who, I was told, had all her prospects in life ruined by me. I think I must have been in a state of mental aberration, for, acting under the impulse of the moment, I promised to marry Hetty!"

"When people act upon impulse," said Mrs. Arlington, "they generally act wrong, and reflection brings bitter regret."

"Too true, mother!" replied the young man, sighing deeply; "I would give ten years of my life; I would give my left arm to undo what I have done."

"Well, my boy," exclaimed his father, "we must do the best *we* can, and you must make the best of a bad bargain. If the girl's character is not tainted, it will be some consolation."

"No, no, dear father; not a word can be said against her character; she is a good, innocent girl."

"Thank Heaven for that!" cried Mr. Arlington, looking a good deal relieved.

"But you have not told us her parentage," remarked Mrs. Arlington. "Who and what is her father?"

"He is dead, ma'am."

"Then who and what is her mother?"

Silvester hemmed and coughed, but at last he pronounced two hurried words:

"A laundress!"

"A lau . . . lau . . . laundress! Did I hear you aright, Silvester?"

"Yes, ma'am," said the culprit, in a very low voice.

A loud shriek from his mother startled him, and presently she fell into a fit of violent hysterics. She screamed, and laughed, and cried, and moved her hands frantically about.

"My dear Nelly, don't take on so!" said Mr. Arlington, almost crying himself. "Calm yourself, my poor Nelly!"

But poor Nelly was past calming herself, and all Mr. Arlington could think of doing was to send Silvester to find Fanny, and bring her to the rescue. Silvester had not far to go to find his eldest sister, for she was loitering near the door of the library to catch her mother the moment she came out, that she might have her curiosity satisfied at once.

Fanny instantly hurried to the room, and advised that her mother should be immediately taken up to her own apartment.

"Call Aurelia," she said to her brother, "but not one of the servants; nor Aunt Danby; don't bring *her* upon us."

When Aurelia came, she and Fanny, with some little assistance from Mr. Arlington, got the lady, who was still in hysterics, up to her own apartments. There they used all manner of restoratives, and at length Mrs. Arlington became more composed. Silvester was not allowed to enter the room, for fear that the sight of him might again be too trying for his mother's nerves. After a time she fell asleep, and Mr. Arlington and Aurelia left her to Fanny's care, being strictly enjoined, however, not to let Lady Danby come near Mrs. Arlington.

Silvester was much discomfited, and felt very angry at the unfortunate cause of this unpleasant scene.

She had risen from the table when Silvester was summoned to the library, and seizing a large pear, had walked towards the window to eat it, skin and all. Glass doors opened upon a terrace-walk, bordered with flowers in high stone pots. She first thought of going out on the terrace, but perceiving a comfortable lounging-chair near it, and feeling tired after her journey, and sleepy after the wine she had drank—wine being a luxury to which she was quite unaccustomed—she threw herself into it.

Silvester had forgotten in his agitation to ring the bell before he left the room to have the table cleared, and Hetty had no idea that such an act was necessary. She would have removed the things herself had she known where to put them, but, not knowing this, she thought it best to let them alone, much to the astonishment of James the footman, who could not imagine why the bell was not rung "to take away;" and he remarked to Miss Bridget, the young ladies'-maid, that "surely the young person who had come with Mr. Silvester could not be sitting drinking all the claret."

The "young person" certainly was doing nothing of the kind; even had she been thirsty she would not have drank the claret, which she pronounced to be "nasty sour stuff, enough to give any one the gripes."

She had settled herself in the bergère, with its soft velvet covering, her head was leaning back, her arms resting on each of the sides of the chair, while her hands dangled over them, and her fingers looked like two bunches of very red radishes hanging down. Her feet, stretched out and crossed, were encased in large black leather boots, which no doubt made the feet look larger than they really were. The toes of the boots were turned up in an awkward manner. Her mouth was wide open, and she was snoring most sonorously.

Altogether, the figure was not that of a lovely, graceful young girl, which, whether asleep or awake, is always pleasing.

She had been reclining in this not very elegant position for some time, when two or three persons came upon the terrace. These were Lady Danby and her nieces Eleanor and Maria.

Fanny and Aurelia, as has been mentioned, were engaged with their mother, trying to get her quiet after her fit of hysterics; Letitia had just received a letter from Mr. Duff Watson, from Guernsey, in which he told her how much he missed her society, and that though there was a great deal of beautiful scenery in Guernsey, he did not enjoy his visit to that island; and after taking a look at Jersey, and crossing perhaps to St. Malo, he would return to England, and probably trespass on Mr. and Mrs. Arlington's hospitality again for a few days.

Letitia was delighted, and sat down by herself in an arbour in the garden to read the welcome missive over and over again.

Cornelia was sitting at one end of the terrace, reading, for the third or fourth time, a very vapid sermon published by the Rev. Septimus Severin, "at the request of his congregation," he modestly announced. Silvester had disappeared, and the old admiral was taking his quarter-deck walk up and down a portion of a shady alley while he smoked his cigar.

"What can that noise be?" exclaimed Lady Danby; "it is like the grunting of a hog. Surely, girls, you don't let the pigs into the garden?"

The girls laughed, as they replied:

"Of course not, aunt."

"But don't you hear it? What a snort that was!"

The nearer they approached the open glass door of the breakfast-room, the louder the sounds became; when they reached the door, however, which opened upon the terrace, they instantly ascertained the nature of the noise they had been hearing. There was no stray pig in the garden, but Silvester's wife was sleeping soundly, and snoring lustily!

Lady Danby threw up her hands and eyes, Maria groaned, and Eleanor sighed deeply.

"What could have tempted Silvester to marry that piece of goods?" exclaimed Lady Danby.

"Heaven above only knows!" replied Eleanor.

"I don't believe Heaven had anything to do with it," said Maria. "I think it must have rather been the work of some malicious demon!"

"Hush! She is waking!" said Eleanor.

She did waken with a yawn, which opened her mouth so widely that her jaws were extended almost like those of a young shark.

"Let us ring for James," said Maria.

James came instantly; he had been anticipating the summons for a long time. Eleanor and Maria considerately stood between him and the young woman, who was still but half awake. When he had gone, Eleanor asked the girl if she would not like to go to her room, and have some tea sent up to her. Hetty acquiesced in the proposal, and Eleanor escorted her to her apartment, and helped her to take some of her linen and other clothes out of her boxes, for she did not like to send Bridget or any of the other maids to her.

Silvester, meanwhile, had plunged into the thickest recesses of a wood, which was not very far from the house, there to

Chew the cud of bitter reflection.

There was a gloomy silence in the abbey. Nobody played or sung,

nobody talked or laughed; every one seemed wrapt up in his or her thoughts; and the hour of separation for the night came as a relief to the whole family party.

II.

TURNED OUT.

THE next morning, after breakfast, during which meal Hetty had been very quiet, and looked much frightened, though she ate heartily, and Silvester had scarcely raised his eyes, and had not partaken of any of the good things before him, only swallowing a cup of tea, Mr. and Mrs. Arlington, Fanny, and Aurelia, retired to the library to consult what was to be done about Silvester and his wife. They were joined there by Lady Danby—a very unwelcome addition to the conclave—who marched in without any invitation, and took a seat.

"Letty, we are going to have some conversation on the affairs of our family," said Mrs. Arlington, pointedly and stiffly.

"I know you are, and therefore I have come to assist at the séance," she replied, in her usual decided manner.

"I thought you were going to take a drive into Weymouth this morning," remarked Mr. Arlington, "and I desired that the carriage should be ready for you soon after breakfast."

"Quite right; but there is no hurry about my going to Weymouth; besides, I want to call there on old Admiral Dodd's widow, and I can't well present myself at her house until after luncheon."

"Then take a drive in another direction first. I am sure Cornelia, or Eleanor, or any of the girls will be happy to go with you."

"Eleanor is taking charge of her charming sister-in-law, and has carried her off to the poultry-yard, which, I believe, she expressed some wish to see. I want to know what you are going to do with the new-married couple?" she added, with a look of such determination, that the parents of the culprit saw there was no hope of getting rid of her.

"Do you intend to let them take up their abode here at the abbey?" Lady Danby asked.

"I think not," said Mr. Arlington.

"It would be very foolish if you did. The girl is really not presentable," was Lady Danby's pleasant reply.

Mrs. Arlington was on the point of giving her a sharp answer, and advising her to mind her own business and let theirs alone; but she remembered how entirely they were in her sister's power, and prudently refrained from irritating her.

"I dare say," continued the intruder, "that none of you have formed as yet the slightest idea what to do. Now, I will give you *my* opinion. Just send the girl home to her parents, give her ten pounds in her pocket to pay her expenses to Cambridge, and tell her that as long as she remains with her own friends, and does not force herself either upon Silvester or his family—in fact, gives him up—she shall receive a comfortable annuity; promise her forty, fifty, or even a hundred a year, to get rid of her. They—she and her parents—will likely take that bait."

"And what good would that do to Silvester?" asked his father. "He cannot unmarry her; he is bound to her for life, *if* it was a *bonâ fide* marriage, which it shall be my business to find out. It would be

only leading the unhappy boy into guilt and misery to make him throw off his wife, separate from her entirely, and enter again into the society of young ladies of his own rank in life."

"I don't think so ill of Silvester as to believe he would commit bigamy," said Lady Danby.

"No—nor I; but he might entertain some attachment which might render him a prey to wretchedness and despair, and *might* end in the commission of sin," replied Mr. Arlington.

Mrs. Arlington had sat silent much longer than she liked, so she exclaimed, peevishly,

"Your suggestions may be *very* sensible, Letty, but they *cannot* be acted upon." Then, turning to her husband, she said, "The first thing to be done is to get them away from the abbey. Here they *shall* not stay."

"Send them to Guernsey or Jersey," said Fanny. "They can go on board the steamer late in the evening, so that no one in Weymouth can recognise Silvester."

"Send them to Guernsey or Jersey, Fanny! For Mr. Duff Watson to recognise the name, and find out the whole of this pretty romance. I don't know what Letitia would say to that. You are a goose, Fanny!"

"Arlington, let us pack them off this very day to Exeter; they can go into quiet lodgings there until something can be fixed for them in future. I don't at all know what Silvester will be capable of doing. Of course he must give up the law."

"Perhaps I might be able to get him a clerkship at one of the mines in Cornwall or Wales," Mr. Arlington ventured to say.

"A nice plan!" exclaimed Mrs. Arlington. "And have him and his low-bred wife popping in upon us whenever they pleased either in town or here. No, no; I will not consent to any such location for them."

"Why should they not emigrate?" asked Aurelia.

"I was just going to speak of their emigrating," replied her mother. "We must get them out as soon as possible to Australia or New Zealand, Arlington. We must put the ocean between that young woman and us."

"Well, I think that will be a very good plan," remarked Lady Danby. "And if the girl has been accustomed to household occupations, and can cook, and bake bread, and make butter, she may be very useful to him out in some of those half-civilised places."

The conclave broke up; and it was immediately afterwards agreed by Mr. and Mrs. Arlington in private that Silvester and his wife should be sent to Exeter, with money enough to keep them going, until arrangements could be made for shipping them off to some distant colony.

Silvester, who felt exceedingly uncomfortable in what ought to have been his home, was sent for by his father and mother, for Mrs. Arlington would not let her husband see him alone, lest he should be induced to agree to the young man's wishes, whatever these might be.

He was informed of the resolution which had been taken respecting himself and the young person he had thought fit to make his wife. They were to leave the abbey immediately, and take lodgings in Exeter or Exmouth, living in seclusion until they could emigrate.

"It will be better for yourself, my poor boy," said Mr. Arlington, kindly. "There is no career open before you, that I see, in this country.

You have not finished your studies at Cambridge, and would hardly wish to go back there now. You are too old for the navy or the army; all professions require preparation, and with such a clog as you have provided for yourself, you would find yourself quite looked down upon in society. In one of the new colonies you may get on better; we must see which will suit you best, and where you may have a chance of doing well."

"Silvester," said Mrs. Arlington, sternly, "you may be thankful that you have so good a father, who does not cast you off at once, and for ever!"

The young man had no choice but to agree to his father's proposals. He was entirely dependent upon his parents, he had no means of maintaining his wife, his last quarter's allowance had been principally lavished upon the greedy and cunning mother of the girl he had married, and he had not so much as five pounds remaining in his possession! It was a painful and mortifying situation; but he had brought it upon himself, and though he felt angry and disgusted at the young woman for whose sake he had made such a wreck of his prospects and future life, he knew that he had no right to blame her. *She* was taken out of her element, and certainly she was not happy any more than himself.

Poor Silvester had no one to sympathise with him, no one to listen to his regrets, except his sister Eleanor. She tried to soothe him, and to comfort him with the hope of better days. She told him that if he made a fortune either in Australia, Van Diemen's Land, or New Zealand, when he returned a rich man nobody would remember his youthful years, or care who his wife was.

"Work hard, dear Silvester," she said, "and make a fortune honestly. Your conscience may be at ease, and you may return to a brighter future in your native land!"

Happy the young man who has a kind, amiable, and sensible sister to comfort him under all the tribulations and trials his own folly may have brought upon him!

Mrs. Arlington was in a feverish hurry to get rid of her second son and "the odious girl" he had brought with him. She refused to admit that there could be any one redeeming point about Silvester's low-born wife.

"Get her out of the house!" she said to her daughters. "I won't see her; she must not, and shall not, stay here even another night."

Eleanor, Maria, and Aurelia all pleaded for permission for the young couple to stay one more night, and start early next morning. But Mrs. Arlington was inexorable, and they were hurried away immediately after luncheon. Lady Danby had to go in the waggonette to Weymouth, for the carriage was wanted to take Silvester and Hetty to the railway station. Nobody saw them off except Eleanor, Maria, and Sir Thomas Danby; the good-natured admiral handed Mrs. Silvester into the carriage as politely as if she had belonged to one of the best of the county families, and on shaking hands with Silvester he whispered to him, in disjointed sentences,

"Keep up your spirits, my boy! Put your shoulder to the wheel, and gain a livelihood for yourself; independence is a good thing; the wind may change yet. Be kind to the poor girl; neither your father nor I will ever throw you off."

Eleanor was in tears, but Maria smiled upon the homeless couple.

Hetty smiled back; she had never been in a private carriage before, and, like a child, was quite pleased with the novelty, and also with the comfort of the vehicle. Silvester looked the picture of despair, though he endeavoured to seem utterly indifferent.

As the carriage drove down the avenue, Hetty, who was staring about her, remarked how pretty the trees were, and how big.

"Yes," said Silvester, "magnificent trees, which *I* shall never more behold! I am driven forth from my ancestral house, like another Cain, to wander laden with obloquy and disgrace over the world. And for whom? For *you*. Why did you not marry that fellow, the farmer's son, who was after you? If, indeed, the story about him was not all a lie of your mother's."

"No, it was not a lie," the girl said, beginning to whimper. "Ralph did wish to marry me."

"Why did you not marry him, then?"

"Because I loved you better."

"Your love has been fatal to me," muttered Silvester, coiling himself up in the corner of the carriage, and not speaking to her again until they reached the railway station.

III.

SIR THOMAS DANBY MEETS AN OLD FRIEND.

"I THINK you were wrong to send Silvester and the girl off to Exeter, Nelly," said Lady Danby to her sister, when the ladies had risen from the dinner-table on the day upon which the unwelcome couple had been packed off from the abbey. Mrs. Arlington had come down to dinner that day, though she had not made her appearance either at breakfast or luncheon.

"And pray why am I wrong?" demanded Mrs. Arlington, in no dulcet accents.

"Because Exeter is a very dull place, and I don't know how the young man is going to get through his time there."

"That is his look out, my good sister. He has got the wife he selected for himself; if he is not happy it is his own fault."

"But as you are going to send him away to Australia, or some of those colonies, he might have spent the interim in some seaport town, where he might have found more amusement."

"Very well!" replied Mrs. Arlington, with a cold sneer; "then I shall have him told to go to Plymouth, and you will have an opportunity of catering for his amusement, and doubtless that of his . . . . charming wife."

"I did not say Plymouth, Nelly; it would be rather a disadvantage to your family that they came there."

"I don't see what disadvantage it would be to *my* family," answered Mrs. Arlington, in the same sarcastic tone. "They go very seldom to Plymouth, and it is of no consequence to us what *your* friends think of us; your having another Miss Danby to marry is nothing to us."

Lady Danby was much provoked. She had brought the little skirmish upon herself by her love of interfering and directing in the concerns of

others; but she and her sister, Mrs. Arlington, were alike in one respect: they both thought they never could do wrong, and were both selfish and egotistical.

"Susan Danby has nothing," said Lady Danby, "and if she can't get married, her uncle and I will have to maintain her by-and-by. It is for my own interest to get the admiral's nieces off. Your daughters will have six or seven thousand pounds a-piece, and many a man would be glad to get that."

"The young men of the present day look for a great deal more," replied Mrs. Arlington. "They don't generally think any girl worth marrying, if she were a Venus, under ten or fifteen thousand pounds at the least; they expect to be maintained by their wives."

"Then half the kingdom will be full of old maids soon," said Lady Danby, laughing, "for every father cannot give or leave his daughters from ten to twenty thousand pounds each. It will be necessary to found Protestant convents or houses of refuge for elderly maiden ladies who cannot afford to keep up establishments."

"It is no jesting matter," replied Mrs. Arlington, angrily, "and it is incumbent on all parents to economise, and not to waste their substance upon useless guests."

Mrs. Arlington left the room with her face flushed, and in a hurried manner, not with her usual quiet and gliding step.

"Ha-ha-ha!" laughed Lady Danby. "That is a hit at us, and a hint to boot. But I am not going to notice either hit or hint. I don't intend to stir from the abbey for some time to come. She can't well put us out as she did her son and his wife."

There was a dinner-party the next day at Arlington Abbey, and nobody seemed to remember poor Silvester. But Eleanor thought of him, and felt sad at the idea that he was sitting in some confined dingy lodging in Exeter, with no society but that of his very inferior wife, who could not be a companion for him. And he was to be saddled with her for perhaps a long, long lifetime!

"If she were only a lady," she said to herself, "and had the feelings, and habits, and education of a lady, it would not signify how poor she was! But she is only fit to move in the lower grade of society. Poor, poor Silvester! How he has thrown himself away! And such a handsome, gentlemanly young man as he is!"

The sisters all agreed that they wished Silvester had been introduced to Miss FitzHenry, whom Richard would not take, or rather was not allowed by Mrs. Larpent to take. She was not beautiful, neither was she clever nor fascinating in manners, but she was amiable and lady-like, and a nice girl on the whole.

Two or three days passed over with no little discomfort to the family at the abbey, always excepting the admiral, who was not easily put out of temper or spirits. He found enough of amusement in reading, driving, riding, shooting, and fishing, besides visiting the men-of-war at Portland. Lady Danby was angry because she saw that her sister wanted to get rid of her; but as it was convenient to remain at Arlington Abbey until she went to pay a visit to Ilfracombe, from whence she was going to South Wales, she was determined to make good her stay. The fact was, she had let her house at Plymouth for three months, and had to get through

that time somewhere else; but she did not choose to pay for lodgings anywhere. Most people must have had some experience of this class of burs, who fasten themselves on you without any desire on the part of the victim, and whom it is impossible to shake off while they choose to stick on.

After a few days, however, there was a little break in the monotony of the abbey, and in the threatening clouds which hung over its internal atmosphere.

Sir Thomas Danby fell in at Weymouth with a former friend of his, originally a sea-going man like himself. They had not met for a few years, and were delighted to see each other again. There is a great deal more of this frank, pleasant *esprit de corps* in the navy than in any other profession.

"Why, Danby! old fellow—can that be you?" shouted a strong voice, which proceeded from an elderly gentleman, who, like the admiral, had been standing on the esplanade looking at the evolutions of some of the female bathers, and laughing heartily at them.

"Loftus—Adam! Where did *you* drop from?" exclaimed Sir Thomas, facing round and holding out his hand.

"From the train that arrived half an hour ago. I just went to the hotel yonder to order some lunch, and then I strolled down here to see the fun. I heard such roars of laughter, that I thought something comical must be going on. These mermaids, or water nymphs, seem to enjoy the attention they attract."

"Water nymphs!" cried Sir Thomas. "I should think many of them are rather too fat to have that name applied to them."

"Well, we will leave the fat and the scraggy to disport among the waves, and take a quiet seat a little farther up the esplanade," said Sir Adam Loftus.

"Why did you never come to see me at Plymouth?" asked Sir Thomas.

"Why, my dear fellow, it was sheer laziness prevented me. I went nowhere. I have led quite the life of an anchorite for a long time past."

"But why? You who used to be so gay, so fond of dancing, and making love to all the pretty girls?"

"Ah! That was in my youthful days, and—I may admit to you, Danby—my happiest days. I have never been so happy since I left the navy as when I was in it. You know I was only a poor younger son; but the unfortunate deaths of my two elder brothers made me heir to the title and property. I did not wish to give up the navy, but my father made a point of it. I had scarcely been settled at home when he died too. My mother was dead, as you know; I had only one sister living, and she was mistress of everything at Hurst Dale. I never fathomed her reasons, but she was most unwilling for me to marry. I used to think that she did not wish to yield her position and influence to any wife I might choose. She had plenty of good offers herself, but refused them all—for *my* sake, she said."

"It was a great pity she did not provide herself with a husband!" interrupted Sir Thomas. "Then she might have let you go; it would have been much better for you to have been married, and had a family of your own about you."

"Sometimes I thought so; but one becomes quite rusticated living as we did. We had no *near* neighbours; nothing to stir us up. Every day brought its little routine duties and arrangements, and the circle of one's wishes and thoughts became narrower and narrower. Once or twice we went to Paris, but came home quite disgusted with that gay capital. We also went once or twice to London in the season, but we were like fish out of water there, and gladly returned to our rural seclusion."

"I think your sister acted a very selfish and unkind part!" exclaimed the admiral, with knitted brows.

"She meant it well, poor thing, I afterwards discovered; it was an error in judgment on her part," replied Sir Adam. He continued: "She had a secret on her mind which she never disclosed to any one, and which must have been a great trial to her. It was for my sake that she buried it in her own heart. I have often seen her looking quite melancholy and abstracted for a long time, and when I asked her what was the matter, if any of the servants had annoyed her, or anything had gone wrong with her charity school, she used to say that it was the moaning of her wind, or the rustling of the leaves, which always made her feel sad. After her death, I, as her executor and nearest relative, had to look over the papers, and, in doing so, I stumbled upon a sealed envelope, on which was written, 'Not to be opened until I die.'

"As she was dead, poor thing, I opened it, and found that it contained two or three letters from Edward, my second brother, to her. The first, informing her that he had married a young French girl, who was a Roman Catholic. They were married according to the rites of the Roman Catholic Church, but never by an English clergyman. He did not know if the marriage would be considered legal in England. But that he thought of little consequence, as they intended to reside abroad, and as his elder brother was alive, there was no chance of his coming to the title, or getting his father's property. The old gentleman's allowance to Edward was very liberal, and he and his wife lived comfortably upon it. He charged his sister not to mention his marriage, lest his father should withdraw or reduce his allowance. This letter was dated several years ago. After an interregnum of about two years, there appeared to have come another letter, in which he mentioned that his wife had died shortly after the birth of a little boy, and that he himself was very ill. They had removed from their former home at St. Omer, and had gone to live at a place near Paris, where his wife's brother was curé. In the third letter, which seemed to have soon followed the last, he thanked her for her kind sympathy, and her offer to communicate his marriage to their father, and to endeavour to arrange his return home, bringing his little boy with him. A communication from the curé of the village informed my sister of poor Edward's death, and that, according to the wish of the child's mother, he—the curé—had taken charge of the little boy, who was named 'Jules Lamotte'—Julia Lamotte being his mother's name.

"An account of my poor brother's death was transmitted to my father by the banker in Paris, through whom money had been conveyed to Edward. And his death afterwards appeared in the English newspapers. My father never heard that he had left a child."

"Then the boy was left dependent on the curé?"

"No; for my sister wrote him that she would send forty pounds—a thousand francs—annually for the child's maintenance during her father's life. And when he was removed from this world, if she had more means, she would increase the allowance. She forwarded the money regularly through the kind help of our family doctor, who, knowing how charitable poor Dora was, thought the annual remittance was to some pensioner, whose name, from motives of delicacy, she did not wish to appear in the transaction. When my eldest brother died, as he was a bachelor, I became heir to the title and estate; but I assure you I had no idea that there was any other claimant to them."

"Oh, I see!" cried Sir Thomas Danby. "Your sister, not wishing you dispossessed, continued to conceal the existence of the boy."

"Just so," answered Sir Adam. "She did not wish me dispossessed for a French child, of whom she knew nothing; at the same time she feared my marrying and having a son, lest the child's uncle, or he himself when he grew older, might be troublesome, and dispute my rights."

"And when you heard the story, what did you do?"

"Why, Danby, there was only one course open to me as an honest man. I went to France, taking the papers with me, and hunted up the curé who was the brother of the boy's mother. I ascertained that the boy Jules had been educated at a Catholic seminary, and being a sickly lad, and not bright in his intellect, the uncle thought he would be quite unfit to buffet with the world, and would be safest in a monastery. He had, consequently, gone into one as a boarder, with a view to taking the vows; but he had not lived to do that. Poor Edward, it appeared, had never mentioned that his father was a baronet with a large fortune, and great was the curé's surprise on hearing it. I saw the register of the lad's death, and also his grave in the cemetery of the monastic establishment. It was a humble resting-place, a low mound of earth with a wooden cross at its head, on which was roughly carved the single name 'Jules.' The grave was in a pretty shady spot, and a wreath of immortelles hung on the simple cross."

"Poor boy!" exclaimed Sir Thomas. "A brief life his must have been, and probably a cheerless one!"

"Dull and monotonous, no doubt," replied Sir Adam Loftus, "but he knew nothing better, and I hardly think he could have been unhappy. His uncle the curé had been kind to him, I was told. He was very fond of music, and played a good deal on the flute, they told me. He was also fond of singing with the—the choristers we would call them in our church—I don't know what the Roman Catholics call them."

"An innocent amusement," said the admiral, "which must have helped him to pass his time pleasantly."

"Yes, God is good to his creatures, and leaves none altogether wretched, except through the effects of their own vice," replied Sir Adam. "I often think now, when I look at yon bright skies, that the poor unowned orphan is in some blessed world up there, playing among the angels on their golden harps!"

Tears stood in the good man's eyes, and his friend had too much feeling to interrupt, by any light words, the holy train of sentiment that seemed passing through his mind.

WANDERINGS THROUGH ITALY IN SEARCH OF ITS ANCIENT REMAINS.

BY CRAUFURD TAIT RAMAGE, LL.D.

XXIV.

HAVING satisfied my curiosity as to the ruins of Heracleia, I left Policoro in a cart drawn by two buffaloes, which are made use of for such purposes, and passed over a level plain for a mile, when we reached a large and muddy river, which I knew to be the ancient Aciris, now the Agri. It was on the rising ground lying before me that a celebrated battle (B.C. 280) between Pyrrhus and the Romans is believed to have been fought. The buffaloes had no difficulty in carrying me across, but I could not have passed it on foot. In the winter it must be quite impassable, except by boat. On reaching the opposite bank, I dismounted, and walked forward slowly through a country which showed no signs of cultivation. Wearied, I threw myself down under the shade, and began to examine my map with much anxiety, to consider what probability there was that I should be able to reach Taranto along the coast. After passing Torre à Mare, the coast seemed perfectly desert; and this is what everybody has told me. While I was thus employed, I was interrupted by hearing behind me, on the path along which I had passed, the sound of voices, merrily singing, and the clatter of mules' feet. Ere long three muleteers came in sight, and, when they saw me, you may imagine their astonishment to find a "forestière," as I am called here, in such a lonely spot. I joined them; and, inquiring whither they were bound, was delighted to hear that they were on their way to Taranto. They were to sleep at Scanzana, where I had intended to take up my abode. All my anxiety at once vanished, as I had no difficulty in making an arrangement that I should have one of their mules, stipulating that they should stop at Torre à Mare a few hours, that I might visit the ruins of Metapontum, and in every other way they were to conform to my commands. I could not have arranged matters better, and the want of a saddle, which would have annoyed me at another time, was not to be thought of except as a good joke.

I need not say that my lodgings were of the most miserable description; and indeed, if I had thought that it would turn out to be such as I eventually found, I should have spent the night in the open air, at the risk of malaria fever, which, after all, I found myself compelled to do. I ascended to my sleeping apartment, where I found two other travellers, by a ladder and a trap-door. As I intended to be up one hour before daybreak, I took a very accurate survey of the bearings of the chamber, that I might be able to pilot myself out of it; and it was well that I had this foresight. As the bed seemed tolerably clean, I undressed, and soon fell asleep, but awoke some hours afterwards with a feeling as if I were on the point of being suffocated. I started up, and tried to get at the

window, but was unsuccessful. I then contrived to get my clothes on, and, after poking about, found the trap-door, by which I cautiously descended. My movements awoke the landlord, who, imagining that he was going to be robbed, alarmed the whole house, and I began to fear that I might have some difficulty in convincing them that I had no dishonest intentions. We were all in darkness, but I bawled very loudly that I was the "Inglese," and began to swear by Santo Diavolo, Bacco, and all the saints of the calendar, that he had the intention of suffocating me, by placing me in his upper chamber. When he understood my complaint, he laughed heartily, and said that I had been above the "forno," "the oven;" and, on inquiring more minutely, I found that he was the baker for all the people in the neighbourhood, and that I had been sleeping above his oven. There is no end of adventures in this strange country; one night to be on the point of being buried by an earthquake, and next to be baked in an oven. I could not help joining in the laugh, though it was annoying to be prevented from getting that rest which the labours and fatigues of the next day rendered so necessary. I could have wished to start immediately, but it still wanted several hours of daylight. I proceeded into the court-yard, where I found the muleteers sleeping soundly beside their mules, and I sat down to wait patiently for the hour of our departure. The house gradually became still, and I was left to my own thoughts, which wandered to a far-distant land. The night was beautiful, and the coolness of the air soon dissipated all the unpleasant feelings which the closeness of the chamber had produced.

There was no moon, but the stars, "le ninfe eterne"—"her ever-attendant nymphs"—as Dante (Paradiso, xxiii. 26) calls them—were shining with great splendour. It is curious the same idea is found thus beautifully expressed by Euripides (Supplices, 993):

ἵν' ὠκυθόαι νύμφαι
ἱππεύουσι δι' ὄρφνας

—"where her swiftly-moving nymphs ride through the dark night." I confess that I could have wished them to move on a little more quickly, as I began to long earnestly for dawn of day, and at last roused the muleteers. After much hesitation they agreed to start, though they assured me that they were by no means sure of the direction in the dark, and that they might possibly lose their way. True enough, after we had proceeded awhile, they declared that they were out of their reckoning, and I then began to be convinced of the truth of their assertion. As yet not the slightest appearance of dawn was seen in the east, and, as far as the darkness would allow the eye to penetrate, we seemed to be crossing a level plain.

There was nothing for it but to halt, and when I had time to think on my position, it seemed rather hazardous to trust myself to men of whom I knew nothing, and who could so easily make away with me without much chance of discovery. The morning air was sufficiently fresh to make me feel it unpleasant, and I continued to pace up and down at a short distance from my companions, anxiously watching for the dawn. At last it appeared, and between the first streak of light and the full glare

of day in this part of the world only a very short time elapses. We found ourselves at no great distance from a few huts, out of which issued some herdsmen, from whom we received directions, which enabled the muleteers to find their way. We crossed the river Basiento, the ancient Casuentus, a small and muddy stream, and on approaching Torre à Mare I knew that I was in the neighbourhood of Metapontum, now marked by a single house, called Masseria di Torre à Mare. Here I found a peasant, who engaged to conduct me to the ancient remains of that celebrated city. This Torre à Mare is about one mile and a half from the sea, and is so called from an old building of a castellated form of the middle ages; but the ruins of Metapontum are found at a spot called Chiesa di Sansone, near the mouth of the river Bradano, the ancient Bradanus. Here are considerable remains of the foundations of buildings. I could, however, trace no appearance of walls, nor indeed any edifice so entire that its use could be ascertained. I then proceeded about two miles up the bank of the Bradanus, till I reached the largest remains of any ancient monument that I had seen since I left the Temples of Pæstum. It is a temple situated on a rising ground near the right bank of the Bradanus, and known as the Tavola dei Paladini. There are fifteen columns still remaining, five on one side and ten on the other. It is of the Doric order of architecture, though it has not the imposing massiveness of the pillars adorning the Temples of Pæstum. My guide told me that coins were occasionally found.

Metapontum is an interesting spot as the scene of the last days of the philosopher Pythagoras, whose house was consecrated as a temple of Ceres, and whose tomb was still to be seen in the days of Cicero. There is some appearance of the remains of a temple at the Chiesa di Sansone, and one would be willing to believe that this might be the exact spot where the philosopher had spent the closing scenes of his life. This city was in a flourishing state B.C. 415, at the time of the Athenian expedition to Sicily, and continued to occupy a prominent position till the disasters brought on the south of Italy by the second Punic war. It espoused the cause of Hannibal, and after his withdrawal from Italy, B.C. 203, suffered so severely from the Romans, that the name of Metapontum never again appears in any important transaction.

It had been for several hundred years one of the most opulent of the cities of Magna Græcia; its territory was distinguished for fertility, especially in the growth of corn, and now it only serves as pasture ground for a few half-fed cattle and wild horses. The few inhabitants whom I saw had the pale emaciated look of malaria fever, to which the whole of this coast is subject, though the nature of the ground has in no way changed, and I do not doubt that it might again be made fit for the residence of a large population, if the streams were confined within their banks, and the land was brought under regular cultivation. Cicero (De Amic. 4) speaks of the decayed state of all the cities in this part of Italy, and Pausanias (vi. 19), who lived about A.D. 180, mentions Metapontum as being in his time completely in ruins, and says that nothing remained of it but the theatre and the circuit of its walls. It is curious that he does not refer to the temple, which still exists, as it must have been a remarkable object even in his time. I spent a few hours in wandering over the

deserted country round Metapontum, but as I began to fear that my muleteers would proceed on their journey without me, I bade adieu to the Metapontines, and hastened back to join them.

I had no time to think of food, but satisfied my hunger with the coarse bread of the muleteers as I jogged along. After crossing the river Bradano, which at this season of the year is small, though in the winter season it brings a great deal of water from the mountains in the interior, we reached the Torre di Mattoni, situated on the shore, and our course now lay along the sandy beach for about five-and-twenty miles. The view was confined to the beautiful bay of Taranto on the one side, smooth as glass, and a lofty bank of sand on the other. Though there is no tide to any extent in this quarter, you must not suppose that the sea does not at times run more or less inland, according to the flatness of the beach. The beach was here at least fifty yards broad, before the sandy hill rose, which was evidently formed by the wind driving the dry sand. Ebb and flow I found not to be alike in all months, being lowest in August (one foot seven inches), highest in December (two feet two inches). Here it is the storms from the south that drive the waters of the bay inland, and I do not doubt that on such occasions the beach, which we were traversing, would be quite impassable. The sand-bank was tufted with juniper-bushes and dwarf cypress, while here and there you get glimpses of pines, which prevented the eye from reaching any distance inland. The beach was covered with many specimens of very beautiful shells. The heat became excessive, as the sun beat directly upon us, till we seemed to be passing through the oven over which I had been baking this morning. I am pretty well accustomed to the heat of this climate; to-day, however, was a fearful trial, and I was now convinced that my friends were right in warning me of what I had undertaken. I felt, in the expressive words of Job (xxxvii. 18), as translated by Umbreit, that "the pure ether was spread before me during the scorching heat as a melted mirror over the parched desert." My umbrella was scarcely any protection, and my clothes would scarcely fit an Irish beggar. Perched on the back of my mule, which had an uneasy movement, holding my umbrella over my head as I best could, I looked forward anxiously for the first Pisgah view of Taranto. Our wine, too, was soon at an end, but our sufferings on this head arose from my own want of foresight, as I could easily have brought a sufficiency from Scanzana. No water was to be found, and the pangs of thirst I never experienced so strongly before. Time, however, brings everything to an end, and at last the lofty castle of Taranto appeared in the distance. Before we entered the city we had to cross the Tara, a very considerable stream, though it seems on the map to run only a short distance inland. Here we were all glad to bathe our throbbing temples; as the water was brackish, our thirst could not be slaked. The muleteers had some hesitation about crossing this stream, as they had heard of people being carried down to the sea. After consultation, one, who could swim, agreed to make the attempt, and entered the stream with his mule, while his companions and myself looked anxiously on. We expected every moment to see the mule floundering in the water; yet he got safely across, and, following his example, we reached the other side, though not without being thoroughly drenched.

Whatever might be the consequence of this sudden immersion, it was delightful for the moment, and seemed to give fresh strength. I thought of Alexander the Great bathing in the river Cydnus, and the danger he incurred. In this case, however, it was only a momentary immersion, and the system did not get completely chilled. In this dripping state I rode into the public square of Taranto, which was crowded with inhabitants, and my appearance evidently caused great amazement, as it was impossible for them to imagine how I should have got into such a state. I must have had much the appearance of a drowned rat, and I was soon the centre of a large crowd, who were all saying, "Cosa è?" "Chi è?" —"What is the matter?" "Who is he?" The muleteers called out that I was "un Inglese," and that immediately seemed to satisfy them, as in every part of the Continent they are prepared to hear of any madcap exploit by an Englishman. I had been now quite twelve hours jogging on the back of a mule, and I need not tell you how thoroughly knocked up I felt. I proceeded straight to a man who was selling iced water, and, mingling a glass of it with rosolio, drank it off, setting at defiance all consequences. It is astonishing that my health should not have broken down under the fatigue and heat I have undergone; I have lived, however, very temperately, avoiding much wine, and, above all, I have performed daily morning and evening ablutions with my sponge. This I believe to have been the chief reason why I have escaped, as the pores are always open, and allow a free flow of perspiration.

As Taranto is a large city, I had no difficulty in finding a tolerable hotel, and here I determined to remain, rather than trouble a gentleman to whom I had a letter of introduction. In the evening I forwarded my letter to the Cavaliere d'Ayala, who sent me a kind invitation to take up my abode with him. This I declined to do, but I found him so pressing that I yielded. The advantage of being at a private house is, that you have a comfortable bed; and, indeed, I doubt if I could have accomplished all that I have done if I had been obliged to sleep at a miserable locanda each night. The only disadvantage is, that you are apt to be killed by kindness, and are sometimes obliged to sit conversing when you would wish to be sleeping.

Here, then, ends my examination of the more southern part of Italy, and I cannot say that I am sorry to have done with Magna Græcia, though I shall always look back with pleasure to the few weeks I have spent in it. It is painful, however, to recollect that the country, which is now nearly a desert, was once the residence of a highly civilised people, where the arts and sciences were cultivated with eminent success, and where philosophy had widely spread her humanising influences. All this has passed away, and Nature has again resumed her ancient sway. Nothing now remains of their palaces and magnificent temples except a few ruined walls, which only serve to assist the geographer in fixing the spot where the ancient city stood. The country has again returned to that state of nature from which the Greek colonies once enabled it to emerge. From Locri to Tarentum, the country which I have just traversed, the whole coast was once studded with mighty cities, whose commerce extended to every part of the known world; now we traverse a shore where a traveller finds it difficult to obtain even shelter at night,

from the deadly exhalations that its barren and deserted fields send forth. The mind is at first unwilling to believe the possibility of such a change, but of its stern reality the last week has confirmed me.

The first view of the city which I had just entered was highly picturesque; it is situated on a jutting promontory, looking on one side to a magnificent bay, and having on the other a small lake called Mare Piccolo. The smiling banks of this lake appeared in the distance thickly covered with the fig, the olive, and the vine, and it was impossible not to join with Horace (Od. xi. 6, 13) in his exclamation:

Ille terrarum mihi præter omnes
Angulus ridet, ubi non Hymetto
Mella decedunt, viridique certat
Bacca Venafro:

Ver ubi longum tepidasque præbet
Jupiter brumas et amicus Aulon
Fertili Baccho minimum Falernis
Invidet uvis.

No spot so joyous smiles to me
Of this wide globe's extended shores;
Where nor the labours of the bee
Yield to Hymethus golden stores,
Nor the green berry of Venafran soil
Swells with a riper flood of fragrant oil.
There Jove his kindest gifts bestows,
There joys to crown the fertile plains;
With genial warmth the winter glows,
And spring with lengthen'd honours reigns,
Nor Aulon, friendly to the clustering vine,
Envies the vintage of Falernian wine.

The entrance to the city is by a bridge, which extends across a small strait, uniting the Mare Piccolo and the Mare Grande.

CHRISTINE; OR, COMMON-PLACE PEOPLE.

BY JANET ROBERTSON.

XXXII.

After this first evening of gay life Christine lost all desire to leave her quiet home; it was, indeed, a harbour in a tideless sea, but still it was a harbour she dreaded to quit for fear of encountering rude blasts, impelling more stormy waves than she might hope to navigate in safety. The weather began to get warm, and the full foliage on the trees now excluded the view beyond the garden walls, of which at first even a transient glance had been sufficient to cheer her spirits and set her imagination to work in picturing bright scenes of domestic happiness. The day after Mrs. Trevor's fête she had asked her father if the occupants of the two houses visible from her windows had been among the company; but he had answered in the negative, adding, that both mansions were tenanted by strangers, who did not seek to mix in the society, and that the family who had inhabited the Villa Zernini, in the park, had lately gone away, and nobody seemed to know if they intended to return. Christine's musical studies still continued to progress, but now with less spirit than formerly; she grew languid from the heat, when combined with her want of rest, arising from her constant anxiety about her father's nocturnal absences. Like all sensitive and imaginative persons, her sleep was filled with continual and vivid dreams, and this tendency only served to fatigue her physically, for her visions were now almost all of sorrow and difficulty; consequently, her cheek grew pale, and the volume of her voice became less full than formerly.

Her father took fright; he thought what a misfortune it would be if she lost the power on which he reckoned for wealth and distinction. He therefore interrogated her anxiously if there was anything he could do to revive and enliven her. Poor Christine sadly smiled her thanks, and preferred a modest petition to be allowed to go with Nina to the church of St. Domenico in the evening, when the heat of the day was over, as she longed for a walk a little more extended than the bounds of the garden afforded. San Isidora readily assented, and told her that, being acquainted with the organist, he would obtain permission for her to go to the organ-loft, where she would be much more cool than among the crowd in the body of the church, who at this season thronged to vespers to hear the music. She was delighted with this arrangement, and so soon as the permission was obtained she lost no time in availing herself of it. Accompanied by Nina, and muffled in a thick black veil, she passed out, for the first time, from the garden-door into the road, and felt herself comparatively free. She, the child of nature, who had sprung up like a wild flower on the banks of the Tay, in romantic, mountainous Scotland, to feel lively pleasure in the simple action of leaving a dull enclosure to walk along a dry, dusty path in the suburb of an Italian town! Yet so it was; her enjoyment was immense, for her limbs had space for freedom of

motion, and her mind for the moment was filled with the objects which her transient emancipation disclosed to her view. The garden door opened into a road winding, on one hand, among walls and ruins down towards the sea, while, on the other, the comparatively short distance towards the church of St. Domenico was likewise lonely, from the path, on one side, running along the garden-wall and the almost uninhabited wing of the palace, where was Christine's suite of rooms, whilst opposite lay some waste ground about to be built upon. At the church began a more populated part of the city, the street leading from it being the one from which opened the great entrance of the Palazzo San Isidora, and into which looked almost all the windows of Mrs. Trevor's apartments. The young girl breathed more freely when she found herself in the more open ground; already she felt inspired by a feeling of returning energy, and her cheek again glowed with pleasure, as her eye, following the romantic landscape lying between her and the sea, at length rested on that element. She felt as if some mysterious source of happiness were connected with it, and the words of Moore's beautiful Irish melody, "The Twisting of the Rope," came rushing on her memory, aptly expressing the feeling that filled her mind, in the last stanza of that most exquisite song:

> And as I watch the line of light that plays
> Along the smooth wave towards the burning west,
> I long to tread that golden path of rays,
> And think 'twould lead to some bright isle of rest.

Turning away at length from the bewitching prospect, she bent her steps towards St. Domenico, her tiny foot keeping measure with the music in her mind, recalled by the quotation which had suggested itself to clothe the gushing aspirations of her soul. Light was that footfall! most harmonious the accompanying movement! And when, on entering the organ-loft with Nina, she ventured to remove the veil a little from her face in order to breathe more freely, truly, the fair, pure, radiant countenance that appeared from amongst the folds of the dark drapery might well have suggested the idea of a sunbeam penetrating through and dispersing a cloud. There was no one, however, to note and admire but the old priest playing the organ, who ever and anon stole a glance at that heavenly physiognomy, and thought what a fine idea it gave him for an angel he was painting in an altar-piece. Christine reposed for a few minutes in actual luxury; her ears drank in the pealing sounds, and her eyes feasted on the imposing pictures and the splendid architecture by which she was surrounded. She felt no desire to infringe on her father's orders and swell the vocal harmony, for the spell of bodily languor was on her to the extent of making her enjoy inaction, rest, and meditation. She had continued for some time in this pleasant state of feeling, when suddenly her attention was attracted by the figure of Sophy Trevor kneeling beside a pillar among the crowd below. The rich lace veil she wore was draped in the most graceful manner from her head round her person, while the attitude and expression she had adopted were calculated not only to fix the eye but to elicit admiration. Christine at first asked herself, "Has she turned Roman Catholic, that she

comes here to pray when her mother and sister are out in their carriage? But no, that cannot be; Sophy Trevor think of religion! Oh no, she thinks of nothing in the world but herself, and of anything beyond the world she never thinks at all."

She looked again, and then the mystery was explained; for, at the entrance of a small chapel not far from the pillar where the heartless girl had placed herself, appeared the pale countenance of the young artist, Ernest Arnheim, with his eyes intently fixed on the riveting object, as if he were meditating sketching her for a saint. Owing to some discrepancies, however, the likeness could scarcely have held, for certainly no saint would have so evidently studied to place herself in a becoming attitude, nor have sought to make an attractive display of a rounded arm and a snowy hand, decked as it was with costly and sparkling rings. For nearly an hour things continued in the same position, both with those unconsciously observed and the saddened observer. The music ended, the throng began to disperse, yet still the fair Sophy lingered at her pillar, and the artist continued standing on the steps of his chapel as if fascinated to the spot in contemplation of the form before him. At length the lady moved to join her femme de chambre, who entered the church evidently in search of her; and as she took her arm for support, she turned, and cast a look of such unutterable softness, accompanied by a smile so sweet, upon the love-lorn Ernest, as to make him start as if electrified. The colour mounted on his emaciated cheek in a burning glow, and a light came to his eye in intense and dazzling brightness, as, following the steps of the retiring Ignis Fatuus of his destiny, he watched her figure until it disappeared in the door-way. It was only when she was fairly gone that he bethought himself of the forms of his religious creed, and, turning round, bowed with reverence to the altar before slowly withdrawing from the church. Nina, suggesting that it was time to return home, at last aroused her young mistress from the painful train of thought into which she had fallen on witnessing this scene of heartless coquetry and mad infatuation.

"Unfortunate youth!" she murmured to herself; "could he but look into the cold, hard heart now triumphing in the agonies of his hopeless passion, how dreadful would be the awakening from his delusive dream! And yet that awakening *must* come, and what will be the consequence?"

She felt convinced that Sophy Trevor had given him encouragement in order to mislead and draw him on for her amusement, for she had accidentally heard her father mention him to some one on the evening of the fête as a young German painter of great promise, whose works were much admired at Naples, and who had come over to Palermo to paint the portrait of one of the Miss Trevors. Slowly and thoughtfully she returned to the palace, enjoying, however, the short but quiet walk from the church to the garden, where she paused for a moment to contemplate the sea now sparkling in the clear starlight. At that early evening hour a few peasants were returning homeward, which prevented any feeling of danger or insecurity; but Nina assured her that some hours later no one could venture along the road alone.

"If the signorina only saw the crosses that mark the spots where persons have been murdered, a little farther off near the old archway," she added, "she would soon perceive that it was no imaginary fear that deterred people from trusting themselves in so dangerous a place, and even *il signore* never goes out or returns after eleven o'clock by the way of the garden."

Her young lady sighed in assenting to this; her anxious night-watches had but too well convinced her of the fact. For some succeeding evenings Christine regularly went to church, where she as constantly saw Sophy Trevor planted in an interesting attitude beside her pillar, and Ernest Arnheim, as usual, in the little chapel, from whence he could command a full view of the idol at whose shrine he was offering heart-worship. Suddenly, Sophy ceased to attend vespers, but the artist still came, although the light was quenched in his eye, and the bright tint had faded on his cheek, which had assumed a dark clay colour. There was a restless agony in his appearance, which awoke Christine's deepest sympathy. She, too, had known what it was to watch and weep, though under different circumstances; and her tears flowed fast when she beheld him sometimes throw himself on his knees, then spring up as if he could not pray, from the violence of his emotions. She felt certain that food scarce passed his lips, nor sleep visited his eyelids; and all this ruin of peace and hope, whence had it come? from the senseless craving for admiration in a vain English girl? The man of genius had fallen a victim to one of those pretty human toys that attract and please when very young and surrounded by the advantages of money and position, but who shrink into nothingness under the pressure of adversity. One of those women, who, when married, are thrown aside by their husbands as tiresome, uncompanionable creatures, whose greatest pleasure is in a new dress, whose highest ambition making a distinguished acquaintance. Christine was well aware that there was no illness in Mrs. Trevor's family, for her father had apprised her that they were about to give a ball before the great summer heats began. He looked uneasy and anxious in imparting the circumstance, and observed that, fearing from the delicacy of her health that she might be the worse of dancing, he proposed merely taking her down for a short time at the beginning of the evening. The day following this intelligence—and just after her musical instructors had left her—she was surprised by the unusual circumstance of receiving a visit from Sophy Trevor. She looked bright, but disturbed; and, although greeting her companion with uncommon kindness, yet scarcely looked her in the face.

"Your father has told you of our ball, Miss San Isidora, has he not?" she began; "you must positively come to it, and not bury yourself entirely." Then, hurrying on more confusedly, she added, with increasing cordiality, "I have got a great favour to request of you, darling, which I am sure you will not refuse to grant when you know the reason. Do you remember my telling you on board the steam-boat that I wanted to ask your advice? Well, do you know it was a love affair, about a foolish young man—an artist—who had become so desperately enamoured of me, as to break through his professional engagements at Naples and follow me to Sicily?"

"How did you become acquainted with him?" softly inquired Christine, not very well knowing what else to say.

"Oh! I saw him copying a picture in the gallery, and understanding that he was considered a genius, I begged him to give me some instructions, and in that way came to know him; but only imagine his falling in love with me! who could have imagined such a piece of nonsense! Then he followed me here, and would insist upon taking my picture, and wherever I went, there went he; even at the opera he would station himself in the *platea* below our box, and keep gazing at me till I did not know which way to look." Then perceiving that Christine did not quite go along with her light and sketchy manner of treating so grave an affair, she hurried on, perturbedly, "You know it is quite impossible for me to throw myself away on a low-born artist, who has nothing but his talent to depend upon; and, besides, he is certainly a little crazy, from the way in which he conducts himself. About a fortnight ago I was obliged to write him a note to beg that he would not come again to the house—as I had my reasons for it—and sent it by the coachman after coming in from our airing on the Marina. Well, do you know that the oddest thing imaginable happened in consequence, of which I can scarcely think even yet without going into convulsions of laughter. Nola and I had gone up-stairs early, and I was sitting in my chamber in my dressing-gown, when the whim seized me to peep out of my window to see if there was any one in the street, and there, sure enough, I saw Nola's adorer, Grazzini, the tenor, parading up and down as usual, singing snatches of songs to attract her attention. Suddenly she began to answer from her balcony in a brilliant roulade, and when Grazzini was looking up towards her, and chanting an enraptured reply, who should stumble right against him but my despairing swain, the painter, who seemed to have come there with the determination of passing the night under my window!" Sophy stopped to laugh, and for a few minutes could not go on, so much did her merriment overcome her. "But that was not the best of it," she pursued, almost in hysterics at the recollection. "Sir David Dinwiddie—Sir Davy, as we call him, an old Scotch friend of papa's, lately arrived from India—happened at the moment to come out of our house, where he had been holding a long conference with mamma, and, being extremely short-sighted, he pitched fairly into the arms of the 'lovers twain,' who were standing in the shade of the wall, just beginning to draw breath after the shock they had sustained. Nola, who could not see from her balcony the actual state of affairs, was fated to crown the whole *imbroglio* by dropping a bouquet of flowers—intended for her adorer—into Sir Davy's face, which coup de main quite blinded him for the moment; thereupon Grazzini, with great presence of mind, sang out at the top of his voice an opera air, with the words 'Non oso piu cantare, non oso piu cantare, i traditori ci ascoltano,'* and then there was a sputter of apologies from all the parties in their own languages, you never heard such a confusion."

Christine was by far too much alive to the ridiculous to listen to

* "I dare not sing any more—I dare not sing any more, for traitors are listening to us."

this comic history unmoved; on the contrary, she laughed uncontrollably, at the same time that her dislike of Sophy Trevor's heartlessness deepened to absolute disgust. At last, regaining with an effort her self-command, she inquired of the young lady on what subject she wanted her advice. The volatile girl suddenly became grave, and continued earnestly:

"This is all very amusing, but the worst comes after. The next day brings me first a billet from poor mad Ernest, conjuring me to meet him at vespers in the church of St. Domenico, that he might hear his doom, as he called it, from my own lips; and next comes Sir Davy, in a dreadful fuss, to visit mamma, with the intelligence that men were walking clandestinely under our windows. He had fairly worked himself up into a rage during the interval, and sputtered, and swore by everything sacred, that he thought he had got into a congregation of cats the night before, from the mewling that was going on in the street, above, below, and round about him, and exhorting her, as she valued her reputation and the respectability of her family, to put an end to such shameful proceedings."

"But who is this Sir David who takes so decided a tone?" asked Christine, not in the least comprehending the drift of her companion's discourse.

Sophy Trevor tried hard to blush and look conscious, while she softly gave her to understand that there was a tender motive for his interest, he being desirous of translating her unworthy self into Lady Dinwiddie. This was a clear elucidation of everything. This old man from India had proposed for the youthful daughter of his friend, being well aware how completely the power of money levels all distinctions of age and taste, where the character is vain and ambitious, and the principles defective. On the other hand, the heartless, artificial girl being anxious to possess herself of title, position, and the command of great wealth, was in a fever lest anything might occur to prevent her allying herself to age and infirmity, which secretly she regarded with contempt and mockery. Whilst this true view of the case presented itself to the lucid mind of her auditor, the bride-elect ran on:

"Now, Christine, don't look so grave, for you must really lend me your aid to help me out of this lover-scrape. Sir Davy was quite daft, as his country-people say, about the tilt in the street, and so suspicious besides, about my lovely self having something to do with it, that I was obliged to say that there was a beautiful Italian girl who likewise lived in the palace, and that it was just as probable that the men were walking there on her account as ours. This brought him into good humour with his 'little Sophy,' as he calls me, and I was immediately restored to favour; but if by any chance he were to see Ernest enacting the despairing swain, I am certain he would break off entirely with me. Now, dearest Christine, do me a great favour, like a kind soul as you are; Ernest is every night at St. Domenico, in hopes of seeing me; do go there this evening, and tell him that I am lost to him for ever—that I am engaged to be married, and must never see him again; in short, try and persuade him to go home to Germany, and if you insist that my peace depends upon it, he will do it, for he really and truly loves me. Now, promise to do this for me, darling, otherwise I shall never feel in safety or at peace."

While she was speaking, Christine turned pale as death; the sickness of fear came over her at the idea that her propriety of conduct might be called in question by the falsehoods of this artful creature. To express the indignation with which she was inspired she felt was, in her situation, out of the question, for fear of occasioning a rupture between her father and the Trevors, which she had a conviction would only be productive of mischief. The recollection, however, that none of her windows looked upon the street somewhat restored her self-possession, and rising while she spoke, she mildly but firmly replied:

"Believe me, Miss Sophy, that you ask a powerless person to oblige you, for were I to apprise my father that I had been solicited to undertake any mission of the kind, he would most probably instantly inform your mother, and might very possibly send me to a convent, to place me beyond the reach of such applications. As to people walking under my windows, if such an assertion came to be investigated, it would be impossible to prove it, as there is not a room in this wing of the palace on the side next the street. It appears to me much to be regretted," she continued, with quiet energy, "that you should have permitted an unfortunate young man to get involved in a delusion, that not only threatens to prove ruinous to his happiness, but may likewise have injurious consequences to yourself."

"Thank you for your lecture," answered Miss Sophy, colouring highly, and with a saucy toss of the head. "Miss San Isidora seems to forget our relative positions; and when she talks of her father informing our mother of our delinquencies, she may not be aware that there are other things to be told that would neither increase her own respectability nor that of her honoured parent."

"How true! how true!" murmured Christine, sinking into a chair, as her angry visitor left the room. "Oh, my father! how cruel is the position in which your reckless extravagance places your unfortunate child!"

XXXIII.

Christine now shrank from going to St. Domenico; she kept within the precincts of her garden, and sought in her music and in her other pursuits to amuse her mind. She saw no more of Sophy Trevor, but understood from some casual observations of her father's that it was supposed the match was settled, as Sir David's elegant equipage was at the command of the young lady, and that she went nowhere without being escorted by him.

When the night of the ball arrived, Christine did not need to wait for her father as she had done on the first occasion, his services as master of ceremonies were no more required; he was evidently superseded in the Trevor family, and was palpably disturbed and low-spirited in consequence. On descending with him to the gay fête at the commencement of the evening, her eyes on entering were quite dazzled by the blaze of tasteful magnificence that saluted them; for the entertainment being given by Sir David in honour of his espousals, no auxiliary was spared that wealth could procure. The hall—converted into a ball-room—was sumptuously decorated, and the saloons

arranged and lighted up in the most brilliant manner, the inner one alone presenting a relief to the general bright effect. It so happened that this beautiful apartment was hung with Indian silk representing a forest, with all manner of bright-coloured birds upon the trees; the couches and chairs, glittering with emerald green and gold, were covered with brocaded white satin, while the rich carpet was composed of squares, each of which contained a different bunch of flowers elaborately worked on a dark ground. The gallant veteran had dedicated this bijou of a room to the lady of his choice, and to render it worthy of the presiding divinity, he had it fitted up in the centre as a bower, illumined—rather than lighted—by a shaded lustre, to make the coup d'œil more mysterious and imposing. The perfume of flowers being disagreeable to the natives of the south of Italy, all those introduced to embellish this gay scene were without odour, Sir David's heavy purse having pressed into the service all fine shrubs with scentless blossoms, to aid the effect of the various beautiful camellias which, mixed with green plants, formed the arbour enshrining the amiable object of the worship of his withered Indian heart. On one of the brilliant couches, which I have already described, was placed, like a waxen image, the lovely Sophy Trevor, attired as a fiancée, her dress, of white lace over rich white satin, looped up by rosettes of pearl, corresponding with her necklace, bracelets, earrings, and all minor ornaments of the most costly description. There she sat the queen of the fête, enjoying to her heart's core the triumph of—what she conceived to be—her distinguished and enviable position. Beside her, like a mastiff guarding a bone for a bonne bouche, sat Sir David Dinwiddie—stiff, formal, and martinet-looking in person; coleric, bitter, and obstinate in expression, with his very light-coloured eyes gleaming a kind of pitying contempt on all the people round about him who had not had the happiness and honour of being born in Great Britain. On San Isidora walking straight forward, and hailing the old military beau with his usual Italian coolness and nonchalance, he was met by a greeting of little cordiality. Regarding him with a look of grim displeasure, and without noticing his salutation, the purse-proud Indian turned towards his bride-elect, and asked, quite aloud, "Who is that impudent Italian dog who is so monstrously free-and-easy in his manner?"

San Isidora had withdrawn a little on perceiving that Sir David did not intend to recognise him, leaving Christine bending down speaking to Sophy Trevor, who, at that happy moment, was too triumphant to preserve any ill humour. When this insulting interrogation as to the father met the daughter's ear, she raised herself erect, and her cheek burning crimson, turned her eyes upon the speaker with an expression of piercing sternness. He started on regarding her, and his face became, if possible, even more red than before.

"You ask, sir, who is the gentleman who has just accosted you?" she said, in a tone of calm displeasure. "It is for me to answer, as I am his only child; he is Signor Ascanio San Isidora, first cousin to the proprietor of this palace, of which your friends at present occupy a part."

She turned haughtily round after speaking, and giving the amazed

baronet a look of indignant contempt, joined her father, who was talking to some Italians at the entrance of the arbour.

"A beautiful termagant! a bewitching devil!" stammered out the overpowered Sir David, quite as much astonished by her singular personal attractions as by her fearless manner and cutting reproof. "An impudent jade, but a lovely vixen! Who is she, my pussy? She can't surely be the daughter of that rascal who has so shamefully cheated your mother?"

"She is indeed," replied the pretty fiancée, with a bitter smile, for she saw with dismay the admiration her aged adorer could not conceal. "She is the identical Italian damsel who I told you lived in our palace at the time you were in such a fuss about the men singing in the street."

"Ah ha! I understand," replied the old reprobate, with a chuckle; "then she is not quite immaculate, this saucy minx. She is one who has her price. Tell me, little Sophy, is it so?"

The bride-elect got frightened and angry at the same time. She frowned, pouted, and could scarcely restrain her tears of mortification.

"I know nothing about the matter," she answered; "and I don't think you should ask such questions of me."

"Don't be angry, my pussy," answered her ancient intended, thinking at the moment that she looked particularly fretful and insipid. "Don't be angry and jealous; if I were to think of the girl at all it would not be as a wife, I assure you."

Leaving this well-assorted pair to pursue their lovers' quarrel, let us follow the object who had caused it, and who, leaning on her father's arm, passed back through the receiving-rooms into the hall, where, by this time, the dancing was going on with great spirit. The excitement which she had experienced had dyed Christine's cheek with a dazzling red, and lighted up all her features to a remarkable brilliancy of expression, so that when she entered the ball-room she attracted universal attention, and, consequently, was immediately surrounded by a crowd of young men soliciting the honour of her hand. The beautiful music pealed in her ears, her eyes followed with delight the gay figures flitting past her, and she longed to forget the uneasy feelings with which she was agitated in the whirl of her favourite dance. But no! such a pleasure was not for her. San Isidora returned the same answer to all those who applied to have her for a partner—namely, that his daughter had lately been so much indisposed as to render dancing too fatiguing. He led her towards the entrance-door, where they found Nina, in company with other servants, gazing with wonder and delight at the pageant before her. San Isidora consigned his daughter to her care; and, unable longer to act an indifferent part, rushed off to the Casino to distract his thoughts by the exciting variations of play. Christine, on entering her apartments, readily gave Nina permission to return below to watch the progress of the ball, a pleasure quite new to the contadina; and, on gaining her saloon, the sound of the music so inspired her, that, setting down her lamp, she could not resist the desire she felt to wheel round the room by herself, enjoying like a child the unwonted activity of motion; round and

round she whirled, then stopped to breathe, and again went on. Twice had she rested and recommenced; when, just as she paused to breathe the third time, her eye was attracted by the dusky outline of a man's figure in the doorway. She did not scream, but she leaned for a few seconds against the hangings for support, her heart meanwhile fluttering with fear; then holding the bell-rope by one hand while she took the lamp in the other, and approaching the door more nearly, she raised the light to survey the mysterious intruder, and beheld the pale countenance of Ernest Arnheim.

"Monsieur Arnheim!" she exclaimed, "why are you here?"

The young man stepped forward at the instant, discovering his mild, intellectual face, even more pallid than usual, and gently replied:

"Forgive me, signorina, if I intrude; but seeing your maid return to look at the gay scene below, I mounted the stairs in hopes of being able to speak to you alone for a few minutes; and, finding the door unfastened, took the liberty of advancing towards the saloon where I saw the light."

"Sit down, sit down!" exclaimed Christine, perceiving that he was so weak as scarcely to be able to stand, at the same time giving him her arm to conduct him towards a chair. "Let me get you some wine, Monsieur Ernest, for you appear faint."

"Thank you," he answered; "wine would do me no good. A few words from you will relieve and revive me much more. The very tone of your voice soothes my nerves. I feel that you are as good as you are beautiful!"

"What is it I can say, what is it I can do, that you would like?" replied the sensitive girl, her eyes swimming in tears of pity and sympathy with the depressed young man.

"Oh, Miss San Isidora!" he replied, sorrowfully and energetically, "it is but one question I want answered—tell me, oh! tell me simply, *is it true?*"

Christine sank back in her chair.

"The marriage?" she murmured, interrogatively.

"The marriage!" he answered, with hesitation, as if he had difficulty in pronouncing the words.

She paused before again speaking, then went on in a low but distinct tone of voice:

"When we mourn the loss of anything, Monsieur Ernest, our regrets should be proportioned to the value of the object; therefore, in being convinced that the woman he has loved is but a heartless, coquettish character, a man of principle and feeling should endeavour to consider her loss as a relief. *It is true!* Miss Sophy Trevor told me herself to-night that she is engaged to be married to this old gentleman, Sir David Dinwiddie."

Ernest Arnheim would have fallen from his chair if his companion had not caught and supported him. Laying him gently back, she flew to the table to possess herself of some eau-de-Cologne, with which she bathed his brow, and had soon the satisfaction of seeing him revive. At last he sat up, seemingly trying to recollect himself; then, turning towards her with a melancholy smile, he said,

"Thank you, dear signorina, for your great goodness; you have

been at once candid and kind. I have nothing more to ask—I am satisfied."

He tried to rise, but trembled so much that he was obliged to reseat himself, while Christine, in marking his careworn countenance, could not control a burst of feeling.

"Dear Monsieur Ernest!" she sobbingly said, "do take the advice of one who, though young, has nevertheless known much sorrow; try either to dismiss this woman entirely from your mind, or force yourself to regard her as she really is, a person without heart or reflection, and therefore one with whom a man of sensibility and genius never could have been happy, even had circumstances conspired to make her his wife."

"Ay, it is true!" answered the youth, musing himself mournfully —"it was all a delusion, which never could have come to good in any way; but she so deceived me by false hopes—so long, so constantly misled me—that the poison became a habit—a habit that will do its work." He raised his eyes upwards with a singular and inspired expression as he continued to pour forth his thoughts. "It was her mediocrity that ruined me; had she been beaming with the beauty that emanates from the soul, and acting as that pure soul dictated, I should have worshipped her at a distance, but only as a bright star that was far above me; and if she had possessed no attraction either of person or mind, I should never have thought of her at all. But she came with her sweetness and witchery to seek instruction from me in the art by which I was absorbed. She threw herself so constantly in my way as to delude me into the idea that she loved me, and preferred my society to that of all other men; and seeing that her mother and sister were not much respected, I thought that with me her youth and gentleness would find protection. It was a dream—a foolish dream; but it is now past—*all past*. Farewell, signorina; *buona notte*; yes, I feel that I must accept your arm to help me to the door."

Supporting him with difficulty, Christine led him at last to the stairs, but when preparing to descend, he paused, and regarded her perturbedly.

"I was asked to the fête," he said, "but I received an anonymous letter, telling me that if I appeared, it might have the worst consequences to the woman I loved. That was enough; she shall never suffer by my agency, but I could not resist stationing myself among the crowd at the entrance to the hall in order to catch one glimpse, to enable me to form a conclusion. I waited in vain, and was beginning to feel quite overpowered, when you appeared with your father. I determined to ascertain my fate by you, for to you I can bear to unveil my heart, to you and to another alone—but that other is not here. Farewell, fairest and best, the angelic expression of whose countenance has been almost my only warrant for the great liberty I have taken."

Christine's face at this moment was, indeed, a study for a painter. A rapid sweep of thought passed across her clear open brow; she paused but for a moment, then advanced; and, still supporting on her fair arm the feeble and unhappy youth, proceeded to descend the stairs with him.

"I cannot leave you, Monsieur Ernest," she gently said, "until I consign you to Nina's charge to see you to your house, which I know is in the next street; some of the men-servants will go with her, and I shall have the satisfaction of hearing that you have reached home in safety."

There spoke the feeling of the brave in virtue! She did what was right and merciful, and, by fearing no misinterpretation, she took the very step that placed her proceeding beyond suspicion. Had the pale artist been seen stealing down from her apartments alone, the circumstance might have been turned to her disadvantage, but she descended openly with him, in the act of carefully aiding him to walk. On reaching the landing-place, she called to her servant to consign him to her care, and wished him good night, saying that she would request her father to go to his lodging in the morning in order to ascertain how he felt himself.

Sir David and Mrs. Trevor's ball had gone off with great éclat; the magnificence of the arrangements had been much admired, and the lovely *sposa* universally approved of. It was true that the Prince and Princess San Isidora did not attend, nor many other people of the first Italian class, for their observation had convinced them at the previous fête that there was nothing interesting about the new comers except the beautiful daughter of Ascanio. From her, it has been seen, they kept back from prudential motives, and in the dread that her father's reckless character might in some way involve them, therefore they bound themselves down to the mere recognition of the relationship which was his right.

The principessa's fears about her adored Tadeo were all at an end, for Tadeo had happily fallen in love at Naples, and more happily still it was with the great heiress of the Albertini, the heiress on her side being enchanted with her captive, and quite willing to surrender her liberty into his hands along with her large fortune. All friends were agreed in forwarding this promising alliance, as the lady and gentleman were suited in age, looks, rank, wealth—in short, in all the requisites deemed necessary to ensure happiness in wedded life. The prince and princess had not married until they were elderly, she being the rich widow of a very old man, by whom she had no family; consequently, when Tadeo was born, he became the charm and hope of his mother's life. Few people, in truth, could have known the young man without liking him, so ardent and enthusiastic was he, without his character being tainted with any positive fault beyond a certain degree of thoughtlessness and volatility. True to his impulsive mode of acting, he had fallen in love with the beautiful Albertini on seeing her in church with her dame de compagnie, without thinking of her wealth, and the susceptible girl had become as desperately enamoured of the handsome young Sicilian, without reflecting at all upon his high rank and great possessions. In such circumstances there was nothing to retard the consummation of the important event, and everything progressed towards a happy conclusion. To a similar conclusion were also progressing the loves of the old general and the fair Sophy. They only waited for the marriage settlements from England, to repair to Naples and seal their bliss at the hymeneal altar. Sir David, though a bad-tempered, sensual, vain old man, still had been

distinguished in his day as a commander, and had consequently held appointments in India which had enabled him to amass a very large fortune. Besides the reputation which he held as a military man, he was shrewd—as Scotchmen generally are—and, accordingly, had very quickly discovered the false position in which Mrs. Trevor had placed herself with regard to San Isidora. Nola he considered what the French term une exposée, who, being determined to follow out her own devices in defiance of everybody, was not worthy of a thought or consideration; but anything that might cast a shade on the lovely Sophy—the prospective Lady Dinwiddie—was not to be permitted or tolerated. He accordingly played the martinet in Mrs. Trevor's house, taking the command quite into his own hands, and never failing to intimate, when he saw that there was the least demur to his ideas, that unless his advice were followed, he should, as a future son-in-law, consider it his duty to write to his friend Trevor in India, and state the case to him. The lady, upon this, became dreadfully frightened, and her fit of platonics with San Isidora soon died a death of necessity. Under the stern discipline of Sir David, she speedily appeared "mild as the dove and wise as the serpent," deferring to his judgment in everything, and acknowledging his penetration as unquestionable. Innumerable impositions to which she had been subjected were discovered by the canny Scot, and many rumours injurious to her reputation did he communicate to her with little reserve or delicacy. Instituting himself commander-in-chief of her household, he did not scruple to comment upon her folly, or to sneer at her weakness and want of prudence, until she was fain to let him take the reins in his own hand to order and arrange as to him it seemed good. He lost no time in issuing the decree that the family should return to Naples at the end of August, after which the marriage should take place as soon as circumstances would admit of it. The palazzo San Isidora, with all its ancient magnificence, renewed and embellished by its wealthy occupants, was to be left for the next tenant who might present himself; a large sum of money, moreover, being paid to the proprietor for renouncing the lease of several years, which the artful Ascanio had persuaded Mrs. Trevor to take of it. The old general began to think that instead of David his name should have been Solomon, so well had he managed the different delicate matters which he had to wind up between the imposed upon and the imposers, little suspecting that of all dupes he was decidedly the greatest himself. He was indeed completely tricked by a silly, heartless, artful creature, who, to possess herself of a title, position, shawls, jewels, and plenty of money, had contrived to persuade an old man turned of sixty that she loved him to the extent of preferring him to all others. She submitted to his maudlin fondness; she listened with complacency to his coarse ideas and jests; she sighed, smiled, or tried to look sensible, as she thought would suit his humour of the moment, so little talent does it require to be cunning. No interest in the fate of the unfortunate youth whose life she knew she had blighted; no repentance for the levity with which she had striven to inspire him with a hopeless passion; no regret for the poverty that must inevitably overtake the poor artist who can no longer work; not one thought of the kind crossed the light mind of the vain, selfish, mediocre girl.

THE ICE-GUARD.

A CHRISTMAS BALLAD.

FROM THE DANISH OF ADAM OEHLENSCHLÆGER.

By Mrs. Busheby.

On the Danish strand there stood a house,
Where a jovial set met to carouse
At the merry Yule time, oh!
There Lena sat, and laugh'd in glee,
Till tears from her eyes 'gan flow.

Upon the roof hear ye not how
The night storm's loudly beating now?
Hush, Lena! hush, be still!
Nay, call the blithesome dance, and let
Those stir their stumps who will!

How thick and fast the snow-flakes fall!
And, hark! the storm against the wall—
The very house is shaking!
Whilst thoughtless pairs, midst song and dance,
Are fun and frolic making.

Again, how loud the north wind roar'd!
Yon blast so shakes the Christmas board,
The cans of ale o'erflow;
And from the scared musician's hand
Hath dropp'd his fiddle-bow.

Of breaking ice is heard the crash,
And now the raging billows dash
With fury on the shore.
Sudden the giddy dance is stopp'd,
The wassail rout is o'er!

The ice-guard has no easy post,
For night and day, through rain and frost,
His lone watch he must hold.
There Peter Hansen, with his gun,
Stands through mist, snow, and cold.

Some trusty soldier there was sent,
His faithless comrade to prevent
Who sought to run away.
This happen'd oft when foreigners
Were in the Danish pay.

To interrupt there stood he, too,
The petty, smuggling, huckst'ring crew*—
A sorry task in sooth;
To catch the rogue with his coffee-bags,
He liked it not, in truth.

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* The use of coffee was at that time prohibited in Sweden; yet during winter, when smugglers could pass on the ice, it was frequently carried over from Denmark and sold secretly.—Trans.

'Twas on that self-same Yule evening
That Peter Hansen, whom I sing,
On his dismal post was out.
Ah! on the ice there comes no goose,
There comes no Christmas grout!*

"To play the Bugbear is my task,†
Equipp'd though in no Christmas mask;
The snow's my wrapping-sheet,
This bayonet serves for my horn,
And in my pipe's no heat.

"Whilst I, unhappy, here must stand,
Yon ugly knaves may Lena's hand
Hold, while the dance goes round.
Yon Rasmus wakes my jealous fears—
I hate him, I'll be bound."

These words no sooner had he spoken
Than the thick ice, that moment broken,
He spied come drifting near.
Then Peter pass'd from jealousy
To quite another fear.

"Farewell, my Lena! never thou
Shalt kiss thy Peter Hansen now—
He's swallow'd by the sea!
Oh, would that to my sergeant first
My arms returned might be!"

Thus mused he, and his cheek wax'd wan,
While the loosen'd ice-blocks now began
To dash against the beach!
Ah! here come friends to snatch him from
The threaten'd danger's reach.

Now dry and cozy Peter sate,
Of ale he drank, of goose he ate,
With Lena by his side;
And Rasmus quits the feast because
Their mirth he could not bide.

May Heaven thus on each worthy swain
Bestow his life and love again,
When both in danger are!
The squire gave for their wedding feast
Both venison and hare.

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* Christmas grout (Julegröd) is a dish used at Christmas by the farmers and common people. It is composed of rice, milk, sugar, ale, and other ingredients.—TRANS.

† This verse alludes to a Christmas mummery common among the Danish peasantry and people of that class. One person is dressed in a goatskin and goat's horns, and is then called Julebuk (Yule-goat). It is his business to frighten the children, &c.—TRANS.

THE GHOST OF STANTON HALL.

WHATEVER may be the advantages of progress and civilisation, certainly an appreciation of the romantic is not one of them. In these days of railways, steam-engines, and Atlantic cables, the marvellous stories which interested our forefathers only provoke ridicule; instead of trembling, the reader smiles. Ghosts, haunted castles, and subterraneous passages have long ceased to excite any interest in novel-readers, and are almost unknown to modern fiction. The scenes, too, of these supernatural romances, so far as England is concerned, are rapidly becoming disenchanted. The old family mansions, in which this country was once so rich—monuments of mediæval darkness, and subjects of many a weird legend—are gradually disappearing. Some have fallen into ruins, and many are being pulled down by their owners to make room for more comfortable modern dwellings. There are still, however, scattered about the country a few genuine old baronial halls, the last relics of feudal times. Within the walls of one of these venerable buildings, a man may imagine himself to be living in the fourteenth century, instead of in the nineteenth, so entirely different are their internal arrangements and fittings from those of the present day.

Some years ago I happened to be on a short visit to one of these old-fashioned dwellings. The events which happened to me during that visit were so extraordinary, that an account of them might almost be mistaken for an extract from the "Mysteries of Udolpho." I was engaged at the time in searching for an antiquarian purpose all the old deeds and records I could lay hands on; and a friend had obtained for me permission to look over the valuable muniments relating to the manor of Stanton. I took up my quarters at a very comfortable old inn in a village about two miles from Stanton Park. The first day of my visit I devoted to seeing the church, and everything of interest in the neighbourhood except the Hall. The Hall I reserved for the last. The next day, early in the morning, I set out to enjoy one of the greatest antiquarian feasts which the country affords. It was a bright morning, though rather late in the year, and the sun had a splendid effect upon the autumnal hues of the foliage.

The entrance to Stanton Park is guarded by two low round towers of stone. These are connected by modern iron gates. Just inside the gates is a lodge, apparently of very modern construction, although much dilapidated, and at that time uninhabited. The park itself bore unmistakable signs of neglect. It is thickly wooded, and, apparently, no attempt had been made to keep down the underwood, or lop the trees. Branches, that had become rotten and fallen off, were left lying on the grass, and now and then appeared the trunks of dead trees. As I was quite unacquainted with the geography of the place, I followed the broad walk as well as I could, for in some places it was difficult to distinguish it from the grass. The gravel had long since disappeared from sight, and was covered with a thick coating of green moss. Dead leaves were lying thickly scattered in all directions.

After walking for nearly an hour, I saw the turrets of the Hall peep-

ing above the trees. Soon afterwards I came to an open space, which extended all round the building, and enabled its form and architecture to be seen very plainly. Stanton Hall is one of the finest old buildings in the country. It lies rather low, almost in a valley; indeed, the whole way from the park gates to the mansion is a gradual descent. Its architecture is of a very mixed kind, and the fabric has the appearance of having been built, or added to, at different periods. About fifty years ago the building formed a hollow square, but one side of it, fortunately the most modern, was entirely destroyed by fire. The gap caused by the destruction of this side was filled up by an unsightly wall of red brick. This wall very much impairs the general effect of the exterior. It is, moreover, quite useless, for the original outline would have been sufficiently shown by the moat (now dry) which runs round it. At the angles of the building are three round towers, the fourth having been burned. Though apparently built at different times, they are all similar in style, and are lighted by long narrow windows and loopholes. The windows of the rest of the building are of various shapes and sizes, and are arranged without any attempt at symmetry. The whole is built of stone, with walls of extraordinary thickness.

After walking round the Hall several times, and examining it from every point, I made my way very carefully over the drawbridge, for, to say the truth, it was in a very rickety condition. The great gate is flanked by two small towers, or, rather, semicircular projections, with narrow windows and loopholes. Over the gate is a large stone, on which are carved the Stanton arms. Time had defaced them so much, that any one unacquainted with the coat would have been unable to decipher it. After knocking for some time at a small door, cut in the middle of the great gate, I was admitted by a tall, gentlemanly-looking old man into the interior. On telling him my name, and giving my letter of introduction, he was very civil and communicative, and informed me that he was the seneschal. He conducted me at once to the muniment-room, which is on the ground floor of one of the corner towers. It is like most rooms used for the purpose of storing old deeds and records—a dark, fire-proof den, dimly lighted by three narrow windows. There I stayed the rest of the morning and part of the afternoon, turning over heap after heap of ancient parchments, until the short autumnal day had almost come to an end, and it was getting too dark to see. With some difficulty, I made my way back through the intricate passages to the seneschal's room. The old man pressed me to stay and dine with him, saying that it was not often he had company. I urged some faint objections as to getting back in the dark, to which he replied by asking me to remain all night. The truth is, nothing was more to my liking than this offer. I had never slept in an old mansion, except in such as had lost all romantic interest by having been made too comfortable, and spoiled by modern furniture. Here was an opportunity of sleeping in an ancient bed, in a room hung with tapestry, with a polished oak floor and carved ceiling, and in a house, moreover, reported to be haunted. Such an opportunity was not to be lost, and, in spite of visions of damp sheets, I joyfully accepted the offer. The seneschal was delighted at the thoughts of having a visitor, and at once set about making the requisite preparations. He was very much perplexed as to what room he should put me

in. The Red room would not do, because it was so damp. The Green room had no hearth for a fire. He ran over the names of a number of other rooms, most of them called after the predominant colour of the furniture, but none seemed quite to suit him.

"There's the Blue room," said he; "but it's so near the long drawing-room."

"Well, what of that?" said I.

"Why, the long drawing-room is haunted, and no one has slept near that room for these ten years."

"Oh! if that's the case, I beg you'll let me sleep there. There's nothing I should like better than to sleep in a haunted room."

The old man looked horror-struck.

"I'm as brave as most men," said he, "but I'd sooner have my hand cut off than be in that room, or anywhere near the long drawing-room, after ten o'clock at night. You surely can't be acquainted with what takes place there?"

I told him I had heard in the village that the Hall was haunted, but no one was able to give me any particulars about it. He promised at dinner to tell me all he knew, saying that, when I had heard what he had to tell, I should give up all thoughts of sleeping in "the Blue room." I persisted that nothing he could say would alter my desire to sleep in a haunted room; and at last, by dint of much persuasion, I got him to have "the Blue room" prepared for me.

As it wanted about an hour to dinner-time, and there was still a little daylight left, we proceeded to make a tour of the Hall together. My conductor led me through a labyrinth of passages and rooms, opening one into another. What struck me as forcibly as anything was the extraordinary thickness of the walls in certain parts. In one of the towers, the seneschal showed me a secret staircase, leading to a little cell, which had been discovered a few years back. He told me it was supposed that many other such passages must exist in the building, but that the entrances to them had not been brought to light. All the rooms on the drawing-room floor have carved oak ceilings and polished floors. The picture-gallery and most of the rooms in the towers have stone floors. The three finest rooms in the whole building are the banqueting-room, on the ground floor, the long drawing-room, and the library; the last two being on the same floor, and opening one into the other. The banqueting-room is a magnificent, large, lofty hall, with a stone floor and a roof of massive oak rafters. The walls are hung with shields, banners, and old armour, relieved by huge antlers and buffalo-horns. The only furniture in it was a plain oak table at the upper end, and a few large antique chairs placed round an enormous hearth. The chimney-piece is exceedingly handsome, standing about eight feet high, composed of black marble, grotesquely carved. Over it hangs a portrait of a Stanton, armed cap-à-pie, and on horseback. The long drawing-room, which opens into the library on one side, and into a suite of smaller rooms on the other two sides, is a magnificent room. The walls are covered with the family portraits for many generations. The furniture is as unlike that of a modern drawing-room as can well be imagined. Large high-backed chairs of dark oak, and covered with crimson velvet, placed here and there about the room, looked as if they had not been

touched or sat upon for centuries. There were two tables, one at each end of the room; and at intervals, in niches in the walls, were large carved oak cabinets, some with glass doors, and some covered in and fastened with massive padlocks. The library is only a little smaller than the long drawing-room, and furnished in exactly the same manner, except that the walls are covered with books instead of pictures. There are no bookcases, but shelves fitted into recesses in the walls, so that the sides of the room had the appearance of being lined with books. The parts of the walls not so covered are hung with tapestry.

By the time that I had examined these rooms—though not so minutely as I should have liked—it grew too dark to see anything more, and soon after we sat down to dinner. The old seneschal had provided a much better repast than I should have obtained at the inn, and altogether made me very comfortable. He was a pleasant, chatty companion, and seemed a man of some education, and almost too good for the position which he held. He told me his history in the course of the evening. He had been bred up in the law, but before he had fully served his time poverty had compelled him to do something to earn a living, and he was offered, and accepted, the post which he now fills. He told me he had been seneschal of the Hall for more than sixty years. I soon found out his weak point, which is a firm belief in ghosts and other supernatural agencies. This weakness did not prevent him from having a considerable regard for the good things of this world. He certainly knew how to make himself comfortable. Under his directions a large fire of wood and coals was made up on the hearth. The blaze threw a ruddy glow over the whole room, making the tapestry hangings and old furniture look quite cheerful. As soon as the cloth was removed, my host produced a large curiously carved wooden bowl, in which he proceeded to brew some excellent punch. When this operation was finished, we drew our chairs up to the fire, and the seneschal began to tell the story of the haunted room.

"In the first place," said I, "how is it that none of the family live at the Hall?"

"For two reasons," replied the old man. "The first is one that prevents half the world from doing what it would like to do—poverty. If the family were to live here, they must keep up a style equal to that of the other country families round, and the expense of that would be very great—more than the estate can bear. The other reason is, because the Hall is distasteful to them; not in itself—they are too wise to prefer any place to the home of their ancestors—but because it has been the scene of many painful events, which have taken place within the last twenty years."

The old man then proceeded to relate what these events were; but as the reader is not so well acquainted with the history of the family as I was, a short account of it will not be out of place.

The Stantons are one of the oldest Norman families in England. They came over with the Conqueror, and were, probably, great men in Normandy long before that time. At the Conquest, they received a large grant of lands in one of the maritime counties, and by marriage and other means they now possess about thirteen miles of sea-shore, and the rights belonging to it—rights which are generally vested in the crown. Stanton Hall stands in the middle of this domain.

From the earliest times, and throughout the whole of English history, we find the Stantons marrying into the greatest families of the land, and sometimes with families of the royal blood. But, although thus distinguished, the family has always been without title, except that of knighthood. Lawyers and antiquarians have expressed a confident opinion that the present head of the family might substantiate a title to more than one latent peerage, but the estate, unfortunately, is not in a condition to bear the expense of so tedious an inquiry. The Stantons have always been distinguished for loyalty. During the great rebellion, they aided the king to the utmost of their power, which was not small then, and Stanton Hall underwent a long siege by the parliamentary rebels. One of the family even took up his pen in the service of the king, and his controversial pamphlets are among the most interesting relics of the literature of that day. In their zeal for the Stuart family, it is probable that they took part in the various attempts made after the Revolution of 1688 to restore that dynasty. It is certain that since that event the family has been gradually sinking in influence and power. One cause probably of this is that mentioned by the seneschal—poverty. Extravagant sons, portions for married daughters, and jointures for widows, have sadly encumbered the estate. Alas! mortgages go further towards making an end of old families than all the other causes put together. The seneschal would have told me all these particulars; but when he knew that I was well acquainted with the history of the family, he proceeded to relate the events which, in his opinion, led to the Hall becoming haunted.

"It is only necessary," said the old man, "to go back to the time of the grandfather of the present owner. It was then that I was appointed seneschal. Aubrey Stanton was my first master here. He was a bad man. He had been a bad boy and a bad youth, and, as he grew older, he became worse. At college, and after he left college, when he married and lived at the Hall, he spent the whole of his time in sporting, gambling, and riotous living. He had only been in possession of the estate for seven years at his death, and yet in that short time he managed to heap upon it more encumbrances than had been effected by two generations of his predecessors. He was married to an angel of a wife—one of the most amiable women I have ever seen or heard of. She brought him a large fortune, which he refused to have settled, and, consequently, it was soon squandered. By her he had three children—Roger, the father of the present owner, who, as you know, is also called Roger, and two daughters. Both the daughters died unmarried. Aubrey Stanton treated his wife very cruelly. Her connexions were wealthy, and, as he was always in want of money, he did not scruple to enjoin her to procure it from them. As might be expected, she was not always successful in these humiliating demands; and every refusal on their part was met by her husband with a course of systematic cruelty to herself. I have heard him frequently revile her with the most loathsome language, and not seldom treat her with personal violence. I have seen him spurn her like a dog when she was on her knees, begging forgiveness for some imaginary fault. He little cared who was witness to these passionate outbursts. For some years he continued this treatment, and the poor lady began rapidly to decline in health. When her son was about fifteen years old, some secret thought seemed suddenly to reanimate her altogether. She had always been an affectionate mother, but now she was

seized with a passionate love for her son. She frequently caressed him with tears in her eyes, saying he was the only object for which she lived. Her health, however, began sensibly to give way. She was naturally of a weak constitution, and the treatment of her husband had very visible effects. All traces of her former beauty had disappeared; she looked pale, haggard, and miserable.

"About this time, her uncle, who was reputed to be very rich, suddenly died. Aubrey Stanton had always expected that his wife would get the bulk, if not the whole, of her uncle's property, for she had been a special favourite with him. Much, however, to the astonishment of both, the will did not even mention her name. The effect of this disappointment upon a man like Aubrey can easily be imagined. He raged like a madman. His treatment of his wife grew worse and worse, and I often debated with myself whether common humanity did not compel me to have him bound over to keep the peace. His anger, too, was increased by a suspicion which is now believed to have been well founded. He suspected that, though no mention of his wife had been made in the will, a large provision had been secretly made for her, and that she was, in fact, in possession of a considerable amount of money. The hatred which her uncle bore him tended to strengthen this suspicion, and gave a reason for the silence of the will. Besides this, other circumstances occurred which induced many people to be of the same opinion with Aubrey. I have already mentioned the extraordinary affection which his wife displayed for her son at this time. This affection showed itself not only in caresses, but in somewhat remarkable words. She was heard often to tell her son that, if he were well provided for, she should die happy. Her sole wish, she said, was to leave him some means, however small, wherewith to free the estate from a few of its numerous encumbrances. Expressions of this kind she frequently made use of, and when her husband's suspicions became generally known, it was thought by many, from these and other events, that they were not without good foundation. For my own part, I am convinced that it was as Aubrey supposed. My reasons for being so certain upon this point will appear as I proceed with my story. Nothing, however, could have been more unfortunate for poor Mrs. Stanton than these suspicions of her husband. Her life before had been one perpetual round of ill treatment and cruelty. It now became hardly bearable. Day after day the most painful scenes occurred between Aubrey and herself. He charged her in no measured terms with concealing large sums of money from him. It was in vain that, bathed in tears, she persisted in her innocence; her declarations only increased the fury of his passion and the foulness of his language. It was evident to me that this state of things could not be allowed to continue much longer, and I was reflecting what course to adopt, when an important event in this sad tragedy took place.

"One dreary day in December—a day I shall never forget—I went up into the library to get a book when it was almost dark. As soon as I entered the room, the loud voice of Aubrey proceeding from the long drawing-room, and the sound of weeping, warned me that one of those scenes, then so common, was being enacted by himself and his wife. Aubrey seemed in a more furious state than usual. At first, I could not distinctly make out what he said, but I afterwards heard him cry out:

"'Tell me where you have come from—what have you been doing there? D—n me, I *will* know, if I murder you for it! What have you done with the money, you fiend? Where have you put it? Tell me, I say! Do you hear?'

"Then followed a scuffle and two faint screams, and last of all I heard a heavy fall, and then all was still. I rushed into the room, trembling with horror, as a dreadful thought crossed my mind. At the farther end of the room, adjoining the round tower, and by the side of the ancient cabinet, lay Mrs. Stanton, extended lifeless on the ground. Blood was oozing from a wound at the side of her head, which Aubrey, kneeling beside her, was endeavouring to stanch with his handkerchief. He seemed almost beside himself with terror and grief. All signs of anger had entirely passed away, and he was weeping bitterly. He called his wife by the most endearing epithets he could think of, and passionately embraced her senseless body. I at once obtained assistance, and Mrs. Stanton was carried to her room. It was long before we could restore her to life, and then she became quite delirious. As soon as the doctor saw her, he shook his head. The delicate state of health in which she had been for some time past gave him little hopes of her recovery. The actual bodily hurt she had received was very slight, the wound in her head being only skin deep, but the shock to her whole frame was more than her weak state of health could bear. Aubrey was most unremitting in his attentions to her; it was piteous to see his grief. But she never recovered consciousness, and three days after she died."

The old man paused when he had uttered the last few words, which were spoken in a faltering voice.

"She was the most amiable lady," continued he, with tears in his eyes, "I have ever known, and one of the most beautiful. You may see her portrait in the long drawing-room by the side of Roger, her son."

The fire was now getting low, and as it was the only light in the room, my host rose to make it up. The pile of logs which he threw on the hearth gave out a warmth which was very acceptable, as it was rather a chilly night. Before resuming his seat, he filled both our glasses from the bowl, and desiring me to stand up, we drank "to the memory of Mrs. Stanton." As these words were uttered, I thought I heard a sigh behind me, and I turned round almost involuntarily.

"The wind whistles round the old place," said the seneschal, "and finds out all its cracks."

I could not help smiling at mistaking the wind for a sigh. The old man then proceeded:

"Immediately after the death of his wife Aubrey left the Hall, and soon after went abroad. During the short time that he remained in England his conduct was exemplary. His wife's death seemed to have quite changed and subdued him. But he had not been long from the scene of his disgrace and sorrow before the remembrance of them faded away, and he plunged into even greater excesses than before. His death was worthy of his life. He was picked up in the streets of Rome, with a stiletto through his heart.

"The history of Roger Stanton, Aubrey's son, is only remarkable in that part of it which relates to the death of his wife and second child. He was as different from his father in temper and character as can well be imagined.

His disposition was shy, sombre, and melancholy. The sad events in which he had taken part in his boyhood seemed to have made a lasting impression upon him. He regarded his mother very much as a saint, and the remembrance of her seems never for a moment to have left his heart. He had four children, two boys and two girls. One of the boys died young; the other children are living now. The death of little Chauncey, his second son, was another of the tragic events of which the long drawing-room was the scene, and the ancient cabinet the principal actor. You remember the large iron ring that I pointed out to you, which serves for a handle to the door of the lower part of the cabinet. Little Chauncey was found one day by his mother suspended by the neck from this ring, his head being thrust through it. He was quite dead. Two footstools, one on top of the other, were beside the cabinet, and it was supposed that by means of them he had climbed up to the ring, and while putting his head through it in play, a trick of which it appears he was very fond, had slipped from the stools, and so been accidentally hanged.

"But this, dreadful as it was, was not the last scene in which the old cabinet was to take part. By means of it, or at all events in consequence of it, Mrs. Roger Stanton met her death. It may seem strange that a spot where two such painful events had taken place was not carefully shunned by the whole family. Certainly they always spoke and thought of it with horror. And yet they were continually hovering about it. Roger visited the room for the purpose of looking at his mother's portrait, which he would gaze upon for hours; and his wife could not resist frequently visiting the spot where her dear child had met his untimely end. It was probably for this purpose that she went into the room on the day of her death. Her affection for little Chauncey had been very great, and whenever she visited the long drawing-room, she gave way to extravagant expressions of grief. At one moment she would clasp the iron ring and address it with endearing terms as the last thing her dear child had touched, at another moment she would cast it from her as the murderer of her boy. Alas! she had better have left the cursed thing alone. One day, when Roger went into the room to look at his mother's portrait, he saw his wife extended on the floor, with the massive top of the cabinet lying upon her face, her hand being thrust through the ring. I cannot dwell upon the scene which followed. She was quite dead, with her skull fractured in two places.

"Such are the events, sir, which have led the present members of the family to shun the old place—to think of it rather as a charnel-house than a home. I often feel inclined to quit it myself, but I am an old man, and have been here more than sixty years. It is one of the oldest buildings belonging to one of the oldest families which this country can boast, and I cannot bring myself to leave it.

"But I now come to what you chiefly desired to hear—an account of the haunting of the long drawing-room. And, before I proceed to this, I must beg, sir, that you will hear me with becoming gravity. From what you have already dropped, I gather that you are sceptical as to the possibility of ghostly visitants. When you are my age, and have had my experience, you may, perhaps, change your opinions. Nothing, however, is more disgusting to me than to hear people speak with levity and irreverence of so solemn a subject. I say this, sir, not with any expectation

that you will act so, but because I have known people of education, and of scrupulous politeness on all other points, not hesitate to treat with insolent contempt what I may have chanced to say on this subject."

I could hardly help smiling at the serious tone in which the seneschal said these words, and assured him he might rely upon my listening to him with perfect gravity, and begged him to proceed with his story.

"It was not until after the death of Roger," continued he, "that the Hall was disturbed by these spiritual visitants. He did not long survive his wife, and the present owner came to the estate when he was only seventeen years of age. Young Roger, as he is called here, has never lived at the Hall, nor have any of the family since his father's death. They shun the place as much as possible, and if they knew as much about it as I do, they would dislike it still more. I received orders directly after the death of Roger's wife to have the old cabinet destroyed, so hateful had it become in his eyes. When the work was begun, it was found impossible to continue it without considerable damage to the fabric of the tower. The cabinet is built into the solid masonry of the walls, and securely bound by massive iron bands. It could not be destroyed without pulling down part of the wall of the tower, and so endangering the stability of the whole. It is for this reason only that the cabinet is now in existence. The supernatural appearances with which the Hall is haunted are always of the same nature, and occur in the same place—the long drawing-room and the rooms adjacent. These rooms are visited every now and then by the ghost of Aubrey Stanton's wife. The ghost goes through the same acts on every appearance with very little alteration, and its dress is that worn by Mrs. Aubrey Stanton in her full-length portrait. She appears in the utmost distress—weeping piteously and wringing her hands. Very frequently words may be distinguished. They are always to the same effect. She seems to be lamenting the loss of some money which she had hidden for the use of her son. The figure generally hovers about the cabinet, feeling all round it, as if to find a secret opening. Sometimes she appears to be struggling with some one, as though pushing him away from something she wants to conceal. The figure often wanders up and down the room, and into the rooms adjoining, of which the Blue room is the one most frequented by it. It appears and disappears always in the same place—by the side of the old cabinet. These facts I have learned partly from personal observation, and partly from what has been told me by the servants. For my own part, I have seen much more than I was at all anxious to see, and I hope never to have any further experiences of the same kind. The sight of unearthly visitors fills me, I confess, with unbearable horror. I would rather meet anything than a ghost."

The awe-struck manner in which the seneschal said these words had rather a terrifying effect upon me. He was so evidently sincere in what he said, that I began to think there must really be more in ghost stories than I had ever admitted. The prospect, too, of passing the night in a room specially favoured by the ghost became much less agreeable than it was in the morning. However, it was too late then to go back, so I inwardly joked off my fear, and braced my spirits with more punch.

"I have now," proceeded the old man, "told you everything that will interest you in the history of the family for the last two generations.

You are now in a position to judge whether the suspicions of Aubrey with regard to his wife's concealment of money were well founded or not. I have no hesitation myself in saying that they were. Mrs. Stanton's conduct when alive went far towards satisfying me on this point; the appearance of her ghost, and the circumstances attending it, do not leave me any doubt on the subject. It is my belief that, somehow or other, at the time of her uncle's death, she became possessed of a large sum of money, which she intended to keep for her son; that she hid this money in some secret drawer, or recess, which she had discovered in the cabinet; and that when she paid her frequent visits to the long drawing-room, it was to see whether the money was safe; and that she was there for that purpose when her husband came into the room, on the day when the events took place which resulted in her death. Whether the money is still there, I cannot tell. I have often carefully examined the cabinet, but I can discover no other opening than the large doors, and the sides of it seem solid in every part. And yet the fact that the ghost hovers about the spot, and always appears and disappears in the same place, would seem to support the assumption that the money lies concealed somewhere near. Perhaps, by observing the ghost, the exact place might be discovered; but this I cannot do. If at any time a large sum of money should be discovered, it will be an immense blessing to the estate, for it is rapidly falling into ruin and decay for want of funds."

The old man then brought his story to an end. The melancholy tale had a very depressing effect upon me, and I began more than ever to regret my rash request. Once, indeed, I was on the point of asking for another room, but the fear of being laughed at for vain boasting determined me to abide by my choice. The fire had died quite out, and the punch was nearly finished. As it was nearly midnight, I asked to be shown my room, for I was tired with my walk in the morning, and anxious to get through the night.

"I should be glad," said I, "if you will show me the way to my room, for I am afraid I cannot find it by myself."

"I shall be very happy," replied the seneschal, "to show you the way in the morning, but I would not go near the long drawing-room now on any account whatever. Pray do not think me rude; I will call for some one who will have no objection to conduct you to your room."

With these words the seneschal rose, and, opening the door, called for "John" in a voice loud enough to frighten all the ghosts in the universe. His shout made the old place almost shake, and I could hear the sound traversing the long passages for some seconds after it was uttered. When John made his appearance I took my leave of the old man, not without some regret at having to part with a companion. As to the seneschal himself, his behaviour was enough to frighten the boldest and most sceptical of men. He shook me warmly by the hand, and, with a faltering voice, commended me to the protection of Providence. Just as I was going with my conductor, he called me back, and whispered in my ear, "There's still time; do change your mind, and sleep in some other room." I answered that I had quite made up my mind to pass a night with the ghost. The poor old man gave a heavy sigh, and looked after me as though he never expected to see me again. John, who appeared to be a groom, walked rapidly in front of me, with a huge lantern in his

hand. The passages seemed much more intricate than in the morning, and we seemed to go through rooms without number. At last we arrived at the Blue room. As soon as we were there, John lit my candles, and rushed off at once, without giving me time to say a word to him. He seemed almost as frightened as the seneschal. I could hear his heavy footsteps on the stone floor of the picture-gallery, going almost at a run. The room had a very comfortable look. The only fault I could find was that it was too large. The two candles did not give a very brilliant light, and, though a good fire was blazing on the hearth, the farther end of the room was quite in shadow. The bed was a very ancient piece of furniture, so high that I was obliged to climb on a chair to get into it. The rest of the furniture was of the same kind—high, stiff-backed, carved oak chairs, and one or two cabinets. There were two windows in the room, which showed the walls to be of immense thickness. The entrance to the room was covered with massive tapestry, there being no door—a fact which annoyed me very much. The bed and windows were also hung with the same material, the principal colour in it being a dark purple blue, which in that light looked almost black. The walls were wainscoted all round to a considerable height with dark oak; over the wainscot was rough plaster. Having thoroughly surveyed the room, I prepared to go to bed. I took off my boots and coat, and determined not to undress further, in case I should meet with any adventures. Drawing aside the heavy curtains, I looked out of window, and found, to my surprise, that it was a beautiful moonlight night, the wind having entirely gone down. I looped back the curtains to let in the moonlight, and it being now about twenty minutes to twelve, I got into bed. I was very tired, and the fumes of the punch had made me so drowsy, that I almost immediately fell asleep, thinking very little about the ghost.

I do not know how long I had been asleep—probably only a short time—when I was woke by the sound of weeping. I sat up in bed and rubbed my eyes to make sure that I was really awake. The fire was still bright; the moonlight made the room almost as light as day. I could hear weeping distinctly, but at first I could not make out whence it came. It was a woman's voice, and she appeared in great distress. The sound approached nearer and nearer. In a few minutes, what was my horror to see glide into the room a figure in every particular the exact counterpart of the portrait of Mrs. Aubrey Stanton, which I had seen in the long drawing-room! It was clothed in a pale lavender dress, very scanty, and made as they were worn at that time. The hair was powdered, and a shawl was fastened crosswise on the breast. The ghost, for such I now made up my mind it was, wept bitterly, and kept wringing its hands and making other signs of great sorrow. The figure seemed to glide about the room without touching the floor. I soon ceased to be alarmed at what I saw, but became very much moved at the exhibition of so much grief. I debated with myself whether, in the event of its leaving the room, I should follow it, and made up my mind to do so, though not without some hesitation. I had only just determined what course to pursue, when the figure began to glide out of the room. I at once sprung out of bed, and, taking a light with me, began to follow the figure, having nothing on my feet, so that my steps might be entirely noiseless. The figure still continued weeping as it passed along,

but in a much more subdued manner than when it first made its appearance. On reaching the long drawing-room, however, it began to give vent to more passionate expressions of grief than ever. The moon's rays streamed through the windows, lighting up the whole room, and the sight of the mysterious figure standing in the moonlight struck me as very unearthly and ghastly. The ghost began to wander about in an apparent state of distraction, muttering something which I could not distinctly hear. After a little time it made its way to the old cabinet, and passed its hands rapidly all over it, as though in search of an opening, exactly as the seneschal had described. It seemed, however, to be unsuccessful in its search, and its failure was followed by another burst of grief. The figure threw itself into a chair, and, burying its face in its hands, exclaimed, "Lost—gone—all gone! Poor Roger, you will be as poor as your father, after all! When I thought it so safe, too!"

These words were said at intervals, amidst choking sobs; and when they were ended, the ghost again groped over the cabinet with its hands. At last, to my utter amazement, a panel of the wainscoting near the cabinet flew back, and disclosed a narrow stone staircase, which seemed to wind round the tower. My ghostly companion, as soon as it saw this, gave a scream of delight, and at once began to descend, and, in consequence of the winding of the stairs, was soon out of sight. I looked down, hesitating whether to follow or not. The appearance of the stairs was very uninviting. They were composed, like the sides, of rough blocks of stone, and were covered with moisture. It seemed madness to trust myself at that time of night, far away from all help, down such a gaping abyss as that. Suppose the sliding panel should slip back! I should be buried alive, with a ghost for a companion. Perhaps, too, it was an oubliette, or a staircase leading to an old well. These thoughts, and many others, rushed through my mind as I stood looking down through the opening. At last I determined to accept the adventure, and run all risks. Before going, however, I took the precaution to place one of the heavy chairs in the aperture, so as to prevent the panel sliding back and shutting me in; then, taking the candle, I proceeded carefully down the steps. They were very steep and slippery, and it was only by leaning against the inner wall that I was able to maintain my footing. I had quite lost sight of the ghost, but after I had wound round and round for a considerable time I again saw the figure, floating apparently in mid air, and not seeming to touch the steps. Directly after I caught sight of it, the steps came to a sudden termination, ending in a small square den, lined on all sides with rough stones, just such a one as the seneschal pointed out to me in one of the other towers. Here the ghost remained for a moment or two perfectly still. It then stooped down and touched a stone nearest the floor, in one of the corners of the den. Immediately one of the large flags with which the cell was paved gave way on three sides, and, swinging on hinges on the fourth side, discovered another flight of stairs, which the ghost at once proceeded to descend. It was long, however, before I could make up my mind to follow any farther. I had nothing with which to keep the place open. The thought of being shut up in what seemed to be the very bowels of the earth, surrounded on all sides, made me shudder with horror. It would have been bad enough to be shut up where I already was; but in that case I should

only be confined by an oak panel, whereas if I was shut in the lower flight of stairs, I should be confined by solid stone. Moreover, as soon as the flag had swung down, the draught of cold air that rushed up from below had almost put out my candle, and I could not help thinking how dreadful my position would be if I were in total darkness. But before giving up the pursuit, I determined to examine the spring which moved the stone. I found, much to my delight, that it was nothing but a common latch, which held the flag firmly when it was fixed in it, but had no influence on its movements when once drawn back. This discovery quite reassured me, and I again proceeded downwards. The second flight of steps was narrower than the first, and the atmosphere much colder. They were also damper, and more slippery; once, indeed, I nearly fell. My progress was very slow, so that, though I was a long time descending, probably the number of steps was not very many. They terminated in the same way as the others, in a small den, with walls, floor, and roof of rough stone; and, as before, I did not come in sight of the ghost until it had almost reached the end of the stairs. But its conduct in the lower cell was very different from what it had been in the one above. It seemed to be almost mad with delight, now laughing and now weeping. At one time crying out, "I have found it! I have found it! Roger, dear Roger, will be a rich man, after all!" and using other expressions of the same kind; at another time weeping, and saying, "Still lost! gone for ever! stolen by you, you wicked man! Could you not leave me even this? Ah, poor Roger!" These and other passionate words were accompanied by most extravagant gestures—sometimes of joy, and sometimes of sorrow. At last the ghost became more calm, and began sounding the walls in various places, as if to find an opening. I say "sounding;" but though the figure seemed to be striking them violently with its hands, not a sound could be heard. The walls seemed to be composed of solid masonry; but after a time the ghost paused at a particular stone, and pressed it with its hands. The adjoining stone then flew open, disclosing a hollow place in the wall, the contents of which filled me with speechless astonishment. The opening was not large, being simply formed by a removal of one of the blocks of stone from the wall. But, though small, it seemed to be full of treasure. Arranged in two rows were about eight or ten bags, such as are used by bankers, apparently full of coin. At one side was a tin cash-box, fastened by a padlock. I had only time just to get a general glimpse of the contents of this little cupboard, for the thin slab of stone, almost immediately after it had sprung back, resumed its position, and the wall had the same appearance as before.

In my eagerness to see what was hidden in the recess, I had quite forgotten the respectful distance at which I had up to that time kept myself from the ghost, and had pushed forward so as almost to look over its shoulder. I was terribly punished for my rashness; for as soon as the opening was again closed, the ghost turned round and fixed its fearful gaze upon me. I was as close to it as I could possibly be, and could see distinctly the livid features, white lips, and glassy eyes of what seemed to be a walking corpse. The sight horrified me beyond measure. My heart seemed to stick in my throat: I could not cry out; and a cold perspiration came all over me. The hideous figure did not move, but, putting a

lean finger upon its ashy lips, motioned me to silence. The trial was more than my overstrung nerves could bear, and, dropping the candle, I fell down in a swoon. When I regained my senses, I was almost paralysed with fear—in total darkness—in a secret cell built in the thickness of the wall of the tower—perhaps shut in for ever. I thought of the movable stone at the top of the steps—suppose it was shut down! The hideous form which I had so foolishly followed was able to open it, why not equally able to shut it? If it were shut, I knew that no human being on my side of it could draw it down. This thought, awful as it was, spurred me to action. I remembered that I had a box of cigar lights in my pocket, and groped about for the candle, in the faint hope of being able to light it by means of them. One after another I struck, but the flame only lasted for a second or two, and the candle-wick had become wet by lying on the damp floor of the cell. At last, when my stock was almost exhausted, I succeeded in getting a light. There were no signs of the ghost, nor of the opening in the wall, but I thought I recognised the movable stone. I was too terrified, however, to care to make use of what I had seen, and immediately began to retrace my steps to the upper regions. I found that as difficult a task as it is generally said to be, but after a few minutes' toiling I arrived at the top of the first flight, and, to my great joy, saw that the aperture was not closed. I did not stop to fasten it, but hastened on till I came to the top of the upper flight of stairs, and there found the chair thrust half through the opening, just as I had left it. I tottered through the long drawing-room and other rooms as fast as my trembling legs would carry me, till I came to my own room, not daring to look to the right or to the left, lest I should again catch sight of the awful ghost. It will ever be a wonder to me how I managed to find my way, but I seemed at the time to wander on almost instinctively. When I reached the Blue room, the day was beginning to break. I threw myself on the bed, utterly wearied with terror and excitement, and soon fell asleep.

At about ten o'clock the next morning, I was awoke by the seneschal, who asked me, with an expressive smile, how I had slept. I suppose he read in my looks that something had happened, for I had a violent headache. I did not choose, however, to tell him how much I had been terrified, and when he asked me again how I had slept, I replied:

"Very well indeed; but I have been engaged in a much more interesting occupation than sleeping."

"What is that?" said he. "Have you seen the ghost?"

"Yes," replied I, "and I found it a very avaricious ghost—so avaricious, indeed, that it makes the Hall its banker."

"What do you mean?" said he, eagerly.

"Well, if you will wait till breakfast-time, I will tell you all my adventures."

This would hardly satisfy the old man, so anxious was he to hear my adventures; but with some difficulty I persuaded him to wait until I was dressed.

At breakfast I told him all that I had seen, and everything that had happened, except my fright in the vault. He listened with much less astonishment than I had expected. When I concluded, he rallied me with my incredulity the day before, and improved the occasion by pointing

out the evils of a sceptical disposition. He said that he had no doubt whatever that the stairs and vaults which I had seen were in the thickness of the wall of the tower, and that if the entrance to them could only be discovered the treasure would be found. After some discussion as to the best way of proceeding, he came to the determination immediately after breakfast to explore the cells. I was delighted at this resolve, and urged him to get some one to assist us; but this he refused to do, saying that the affair had better be confined to ourselves. I was too much excited to eat much breakfast, and we soon set out on our expedition. The seneschal provided himself with a lantern, and I took a heavy poker. When we approached the old cabinet, I could not help trembling when I thought of what I had seen there the night before, and every moment expected to see the ghost appear, although it was broad daylight. The seneschal, however, was wonderful brave. The effect the daylight had upon his nerves was quite marvellous. But my fears soon subsided when I saw standing in its proper place, some little distance from the cabinet, the large chair which I had left the night before thrust half through the opening. No opening was now to be seen, and everything looked the same as when the seneschal first showed me the room. I began to think that, after all, I had only had a dream, and though I felt rather vexed at having been so taken in, I was glad to get back my former scepticism. This discovery threw rather a damp upon the seneschal, for he expected to find the opening already made for him. But he at once set about feeling all over the sides of the cabinet in the manner in which I described the ghost to have done. After continuing this operation some time, suddenly, to my surprise, the panel flew back, and discovered the identical stairs which I had descended with the ghost. In a moment my scepticism again vanished, and I became a firm believer in ghosts. The seneschal was almost out of his mind with joy. He jumped about and clapped his hands like a child. When we had secured the opening with a chair, in the same way as I had done before, we began to descend the steps. The seneschal, who was, as I thought, bold almost to rashness, went first, showing a light with his lantern. When we arrived at the first cell, I noticed that the flagstone which I had left open the night before was fastened. I was very much astonished as to how this could have been done, and could only account for it by attributing it to the ghost. We managed, however, without any difficulty to find the spring, and unfastening the stone, again descended.

When we reached the second cell, I remembered how I had dropped the candle the night before, and had thrown down several matches. I looked about, but could discover no trace of the matches, and not a spot of grease was to be seen anywhere. This, again, troubled me a good deal, and I could only account for it in the same way as I had accounted for the other difficulties. But as soon as the seneschal had thrown a light on the walls, I at once recognised the movable stone, and pounced upon it for fear I should lose it. We were both of us very much excited, and, with trembling hands, eagerly tried to move the stone or discover the spring. But we were unsuccessful. For at least half an hour we tried every means we could think of to make it open, and even tried other parts of the wall, in case I had made a mistake in the exact spot. But

it was all to no purpose. The stone did not budge an inch, and the whole wall sounded as solid as a rock. This apparently fruitless end of our labours was very disappointing. We thought ourselves on the verge of some great discovery, and, after all, it was nothing. My ghost experiences were useless, and I had suffered the most dreadful fright to no purpose. Sorrowfully gathering up our tools, we prepared to reascend. The seneschal turned round to give one last look at the stone, saying, with a sound something between a growl and a sigh, "Obstinate brute! why can't you move?" He then struck the stone a heavy blow with his fist, when lo! the slab flew back, and disclosed the treasure for which we had been seeking! There lay everything exactly as I had seen it the night before—the yellow bags in two rows, and the tin box on one side. The seneschal at once cried out to me to put my poker in the recess to prevent the treacherous stone from closing up again. He then hastily took out everything, cramming the bags into his pockets, and putting the box under his arms, as though afraid to trust them to the floor, in case they should be swallowed up.

As soon as we reached the upper regions, and had made everything secure, a messenger was sent off to telegraph for the solicitor of the family, that the treasure might be examined in his presence. He did not make his appearance until late in the evening, and the agony of curiosity which we suffered in the mean time is not to be described. The bags were opened first. There were seven of them, and they weighed very heavy. The seneschal and myself had been trying all the afternoon to discover by the touch what were their contents, and we had come to the conclusion that they contained jewels. This conjecture proved to be right. All but one were filled with ladies' ornamental jewellery of very great value. One bag was entirely filled with an enormous diamond necklace. The only bag which did not contain jewels was filled with ancient coins, most of them English and Saxon. The value of that single bag, from an antiquarian point of view, was more than that of all the others together. The tin box when it was first opened seemed to contain nothing but paper, but this paper proved to be bank-notes to the amount of 8000*l.* They were crisp and clean, as though they had only just come from the bankers. Underneath the notes was a quantity of jewellery. I was afterwards told that the jewels were valued at over 40,000*l.*, so that the whole sum which we discovered amounted to 48,000*l.*

Such was the result of my adventures with the ghost in Stanton Hall—a result much more substantial than generally comes from such interviews. Whether, indeed, it was a ghost which I saw and followed, or whether the whole was not a dream from beginning to end, I will not attempt to determine. Some people to whom I have told this story maintain that it was nothing more than a nightmare, brought about by the dismal story of the seneschal. His tale, they say, had filled my mind with all the materials for such a dream, and the favourable circumstances in which I was placed—all alone at midnight in a remote corner of an ancient hall, in a room reported to be haunted—were only likely to make me dream that I had experienced what he had described. The facts, too, of the chair which I had placed in the aperture being in its proper place in the morning, and the flagstone being shut, although I

had left it open, are in themselves, say they, sufficient to support this conclusion. All this seems very plausible, but still I feel very unwilling to accept the explanation. The seneschal indignantly scouts it, and becomes a firmer believer in ghosts every day of his life. For my own part, I am not very anxious to solve the mystery. I only know that, by means of a ghost or by means of a dream, whichever you please, I discovered the Stanton estate to be 48,000*l.* richer than it was thought to be. Still I have such a vivid recollection of all that happened on that night, and such a clear remembrance of the fearful look of the ghost, that I can hardly believe that these impressions were made in a dream. But, whatever may be the true explanation, I know that for the future I shall always speak very respectfully of ghosts, and never again pass the night in a haunted room.

As soon as young Roger Stanton heard of this unexpected increase of his income, he took up his abode at Stanton Hall. He has lately been married to a very beautiful girl, and I hope he will have more happiness than his two immediate predecessors.

There is still one point that remains unexplained—the manner in which the treasure became secreted in the cell. Whether it was put there by Mrs. Stanton, or by whom, has not yet been ascertained with certainty. Steps are being taken to clear up this point by means of the bank-notes, and probably this course will be successful. The friends of Mrs. Stanton's uncle, who was supposed to have left her some money, can give no explanation of the matter, and none of his papers have any reference whatever to his niece, so far, at least, as pecuniary matters are concerned.

I often visit my old friend the seneschal. He tells me that the ghost has never been seen since the discovery of the treasure, and the old Hall has had a more cheerful appearance ever since. Last time I was at the Hall, I went into the long drawing-room to look at the picture of Mrs. Aubrey Stanton, and it seemed to me that the expression of her face was quite changed. When first I saw the portrait the features had a look of the deepest sorrow; they are now lit up with a smile.

A FAVOURED NOOK IN THE HIGHLANDS.

BY J. E. T.

Does the "Sasunnach" ever spend his winter in the Highlands; does the Sasunnach ever describe one? Then stray with one—never mind who—who will carry you into regions of which you perhaps have never dreamed, among mountains and glens you may perhaps have never seen, amid corries and crags where perhaps your eyes have never penetrated, or amid rivers and burns which perhaps you are longing to see.

Hear, then, what he says to the Highlander: "I have taken up my residence among you, and I am welcomed as a friend or a brother." Old feuds have vanished, the light of another day has dawned. The Sasunnach and the Gael are no longer enemies, but are daily becoming one and the same people. We will not enter into needless controversy as to which is bravest or which is best, but we will simply answer with Scotland's great novelist, that "both England and Scotland are now parts of the same kingdom, and there is little use in asking which is the best country, or has the bravest men."

During the winter of 1866 our lot was cast in the Highlands of Perthshire, in a district of the most romantic grandeur. Our residence was situated on the banks of a beautiful river—a river rendered celebrated by the poet. We could see the trains passing and repassing, thus rendering communication comparatively easy, and still we were surrounded by gigantic mountain scenery—scenery one loves to dwell upon. Ah, who would not? But then it was winter. We who have lived in southern climes, and have even basked under a tropical sun, would surely not be slow to notice the varieties of climate in Scotland, nor are we slow to acknowledge how much more genial it was in our favoured nook compared with what was experienced in England. A Highland lady once exclaimed to us, "Those horrid English are always pitying us for being snowed up or frozen for the winter, whereas the truth is, we can laugh at them, and return the compliment!"

Suppose we then take the reader with us from the beginning of winter—mind, a Highland winter. The summer is passed and gone; the autumn is ripe with age; the leaves are fast falling from the limes which line the avenue of our pretty residence; the bloom of the heather—"Scotland's own flower"—is wearing a dusty tinge, and the mountains all around us seem to be fading with the light. Not long since and the eye was delighted by the rolling foliage which ascended in billows from yonder golden Pass. Now look! and behold the trees are hoary with winter. Look to the east at the mountain; see the sombre appearance it displays. It is warning us that its day of gladness is over for a season. But stay, O mountain, and let us behold thy beauty ere it is night. Beautiful art thou in thy age, even as the silvery locks of one as venerable. The tourist no longer tries thy rugged ways, nor does the foot of the stranger trouble thee. Nevertheless, O mountain, thou canst shine in brightness even on a winter's day. Turn to the west, and behold that dark pine forest stretching itself over the brink of the hill. What tales could it unfold to the lovers of historic lore! The "blackness of darkness" can be comprehended when we view it; yet how lovely is it to the

landscape! At the foot of this mountain stands a baronial castle, and far, far above, are those mighty mountains of whose grandeur the poets love to sing. Look we to the valley beneath, and we can fancy a fairy dream. There is the rushing, tumbling river, noisy at all times, but doubly turbulent now. Look we again to the glens, and we can notice sometimes the rushing burn, at others the wimpling streamlet, seeming to feed, as it were, the parent stream. (Our feeble pen, dear reader, can do but scant justice to Dame Nature, who has been so lavish to this district.)

Sheltered as we were in a vale, it was not until November that the snow descended to carpet the lawn, but the mountains had been white some time before. In England, the leaves of the trees were off in October, but here they still lingered to the pretty silvery birch, and also the larch, wearing out the stormy blast until every other tree was bare—yet not the Scotch pine, for that is never bare. Those piercing east winds, which have been termed the curse of our isle, and for which Edinburgh is noted, seldom visit our demesne. Whilst it is howling around the corners of the streets, people seem to be hurrying out of its way. Come, then, with us to our Highland home, and yonder big mountain will shelter thee.

November, they said in the Highlands, was always a dreary month, but certainly it proved the most charming month of winter. Those who had a shooting in the Highlands could have many a good day's sport. But the English had nearly all vanished ere this, so that no one but the permanent residents could enjoy it. What more exciting than a walk over the moors on a fine day, with gun in hand, ready for a good bag. "Loose the dogs!" would cry the laird. "Neil, get your gun ready and come over the hill with us, we must make a bag to-day." This order was promptly obeyed, for Neil was always ready for sport, nor was he at all particular. Away then we trudged with the laird and Neil over hedge and dyke, through the snowy heather away over the mountain's brow. What is that! Crack, is the sound of the gun, and down comes a stately deer. The cold has driven him down from his mountain fastness, and he is in yonder hollow when the eager eye of Neil perceived him; searching in his pocket for a ball, he unloads and reloads with breathless suspense, till, hark! the deer perceives the noise and is about to bound away, when he receives a bullet through his neck. After some time the laird comes up.

"Ah, Neil," says he, "and how did you manage that without a bullet?"

"Why, sir," answered the wily Neil, "I sees him comin', and I gave him a ball which I happened to have in my pocket; I'll warrant you, sir, he'll no feel another."

And true enough, for he was as dead as he could be. Depositing the deer in a safe place, we separated into different directions in search of a shot. This time my gun is the fortunate one, for out of the heather pops a hare as white as winter. Click goes the trigger, and down he comes. This was the first hare I had ever shot; imagine my pride, then, being subdued when Neil informed me that I had shot him whilst he was "brushing his whiskers."* There is the sound of the moorcock as he is calling

* The hares on the moors in Scotland turn nearly white during the winter.

to the hen, and there is the gun, and Neil is again the victor. The worthy laird did not go unrewarded, for he managed that day to bring down many a brace of grouse. Sportsmen are aware of the fact that dogs are perfectly useless to scent grouse after the first month or two. By this time they are so wild, that, unless you can come upon them over the brink of a hill, or in some hollow, there would be little chance for sport. It was in this way the laird generally managed it. A more jolly day was never spent on a Highland moor in the month of November. It was one of those clear, sharp days, without a shadow to mar the landscape, but the beautiful rainbow which appeared, and reappeared so many times, and towards evening when the many-coloured tints of the snow threw a radiance over the scene. Far, far away did we travel, and the remembrance of it is vivid in our memory. The good old keeper was rewarded with a piece of the venison, and no doubt it was a savoury dish to him. Many a day did we set out across the moors in the winter. Sometimes the snow would be up to our knees, so thick was the heather, but we were seldom to return without sport of some kind.

Ferreting, in the Highlands, is a most enjoyable kind of sport, provided the fates are propitious. Sometimes you may stand by the holes of the rabbits for hours before the ferret will desist from the fray; at other times you may not have to wait a minute ere your gun is called into requisition. Neil was again our companion in sport on a lovely day in December, when we had the good fortune to make a splendid bag. Well might you call him the crafty Neil if you were to see him bending himself to the earth to catch the least sound of what was going on inside. He could tell you in a minute if the rabbits were likely to run. Seldom did his gun fail to bring them down either.

In our favoured nook of the Highlands, we will ever have cause to remember that the stormy January had its bright side of the picture with us. New Year's Day broke upon us with all the lustre King Frost could marshal. There were the mountains towering away into the clouds covered in snowy whiteness, reminding us of "How earth may pierce to heaven, yet leave vain man below!" There were the sun's rays flitting over them, and there was the keen frost to invigorate us. There were the streamlets struggling for existence, and there were the flocks descending from the mountains. Many a sad tale would the hill farmers hear during this stormy month, when the snow would overtake them suddenly. We have heard of large numbers of sheep having been buried in the snow for days, and being recovered after the storm, many still alive, so hardy are they.

Reports were daily reaching us through the London and Edinburgh press of railways being blocked up, of people losing their lives in the snow, of shipwrecks at sea, and of poverty at home; yet we in our Highland home, though we received our share, got not the lion's part. Far from it. With us it was winter, and the curlers were busy for the month of January with the stones. All was life on the pond or the loch; people seemed quite in harmony with the curler's song:

Blow up the merry quickstep,
Or sound the gay strathspey;
King Frost has come in brightness,
To the pond let's quick away!

To the pond let's quick away
With our crampets and our brooms,
And we'll have a glorious game, boys,
With our crampets and our brooms!*

With what eagerness did those Highlanders make their rinks; all classes mixed together on the ice. The lord, or the laird, and the humble gillie would be arrayed against each other, and the best player was generally the greatest man for the day. There is something—call it what you may—which seems to charm one in these gatherings—something loving and beautiful, to see how the poor can associate with their betters, and yet lose none of that respect due to the latter's rank in society. It is said that the Scotch clergy are especially fond of curling. A writer in *Blackwood*, the other day, told a most amusing tale of one of them giving notice from the pulpit, after service, that if the frost continued he would be on the ice punctually next morning at nine, exclaiming at the same time that there was no more harm in saying it than in thinking it.

From the annual reports of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club (and we are quoting from memory), it would appear that the game—always national to Scotland—is making inroads into England, not as did the Scot in days of yore to kindle the fire of battle, but as a messenger of peace and order from across the Border, as one link more to the present long chain which knits more closely the two nations. At Manchester and in Liverpool, and in other large towns, and some small ones, too, there is the Curling Club, with its rules and regulations direct from the head, the Caledonian Club. We take up the daily papers during the winter, yea, even the *Times*, and we find accounts of curling matches.

In Scotland the enthusiasm of curlers is great during the season; but all interest in the game is lost should the frost return in March. Never was there a better curling month than that of last January. In February there was a complete break-up of all the ice; the trees in our Highland nook put forth their buds; the grass seemed green once more; the birch-trees, though leafless, showed signs of animation; but just when all was ready to break forth, yea, even the ladies to the croquet lawn (and they did manage to, one day early in March), just when we could feel the warmth of the sun, and could enjoy a morning ride, old Frost returned to mar our prospects. The croquet-wires, which had been left on the lawn, were withdrawn. The snow and the sleet came again with unabated ardour. A second little winter, in short, made its appearance. Still, however, the lion's share went somewhere else. Those mighty mountains which enclosed us, wrapped us as it were in their cloaks, so that unless we were on the moors we could not feel the blasting winds nor yet the blinding sleet with the intensity they were felt elsewhere.

March came in as a lamb and went out as a lion, thus reversing the old saying; and with April came better weather. And well for us, for our luggage was packed for a journey south, and we were to spend the spring in "merry England." It was on an April day when we took the train for Edinburgh, and never did we regret so much, as we did regret that day, leaving the favoured nook in the Highlands—a nook that should live in history as at once the most historic, the most romantic, the most social, and the most kindly of the many glories of Scotland.

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* For southern readers it may, perhaps, be as well to say that curling is the national winter game in Scotland, as skating is in England.

DEATH PUNISHMENT—FENIAN ASSASSINATIONS.

We have more than once advocated the abolition of capital punishments. In that good work Portugal, among the other European states holding the same opinion, has completed the task by wholly banishing death from her statute-book. It is hypocrisy for any state to pretend that it is Christian in faith, and then to justify itself for what is anti-Christian, having no other plea except the code of a Jewish lawgiver, which, if followed out, is in direct contradiction to that of Christianity. Thus it would seem as if Heaven could be supposed to consecrate opposite principles as they might chance to suit human convenience or temporary opinion. It is rightly considered that those punishments which place man beyond the reach of any other than scaffold penitence are not only at variance with the spirit of Christianity, but with advancing civilisation. Archdeacon Wordsworth has delivered a sermon, in which he applied the doctrine of a disputed passage in the early traditional Jewish history to the time and rule of a superior code—that of Christianity, so much more rational and merciful. We are not going back to Noah* to learn how to punish malefactors. We shall judge the assassin by our own existing code of law. The principle of a nobler legislator, which stands in direct opposition to that which Moses laid down for his countrymen on the ground of tradition, will ere long be more our guide, and not that of Noah, as reported by Moses. The passage which the worthy archdeacon took for his text is a disputed one. It is said to be consequential, not affirmative, in interpretation. It makes murder and eating blood equally criminal. We protest against being judged by any Mosaic law about the shedding or eating of blood, except as far as agrees with the rule of right and wrong in the law engraved by the Great Creator on every heart. We can only regard other codes or practices as those of their day or time, and the legislation of that people to which they are by design directly made applicable.

But even the English law regarding the punishment of death is much softened to what it was in the reign of George III., when almost every session of parliament witnessed enactments supported by the Church, yet dipped in blood. We have only retained the punishment of death for a crime or two, and, among others, for assassins and murderers, naturally the last to which it should have been left in the application, especially in cases so atrocious as that of which we have recently seen examples. We wish to be clearly understood upon this point. We care not that the so-called Christian faith, from the time of its corruption by Constantine, sanctioned the punishment with other barbarities, setting at nought the true doctrines of the Cross. We care not that some "saints" so called, and upheld as such to this hour, were advocates for putting men to death because of not agreeing in splitting hairs in opinion, as St. Augustine, St. Chrysostom, and other similar models of saintship did. We will not be bound by them,

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* See Genesis, c. ix. v. 4, 5, 6, as recorded by the Jewish lawgiver from tradition.

or their disciples, or their barbarisms, in making martyrs. To render good for evil, and to forgive, is the true Christian doctrine; where crime endangers society at large, it becomes self-defence to stay the evil and to punish, especially where to spare would involve fresh crimes. This may be done without death. The legislature began some time since to ameliorate our law in regard to extreme punishments, but in those cases which are of the most atrocious character, as for determined assassination, the law is still in force, and, therefore, is rightly carried out after the old principle of the Jews, or the *lex talionis* commanded by Moses. Those who quote the passage alluded to for punishing murder do not abstain from eating blood because it is the life of an animal, though the passage as equally forbids the one as the other. Thus it seems the archdeacon took only half the command to suit his purpose. Man must put murderers to death, but may eat blood! How convenient is the inference to the preacher's purpose! But enough. He probably thought "to improve the occasion," as some style it, and needlessly caution his congregation not to do likewise, or else, perhaps, he would show the magnitude of an offence for which, at such a moment, there was no occasion. It was in the last case, too, like an uncalled-for triumph at the victory of the law. But he permits us to eat blood, which with Noah was equally forbidden with murder. Every preacher would fain be a legislator as well as a Boanerges in the pulpit. He has there "a forty-parson power" of domination as to inferences.

But the law in force unrepealed, no common case occurred. The crime was more atrocious as being directed against the instruments of the law itself by an armed conspiracy. The punishment dictated in this case naturally and justly followed the conviction. We do not defend the law because it is "old," as Judge Best did Christianity* and the archdeacon death. We rather think that antiquity carries the stamp of incapacity too often in most things, and, among others, in wrong interpretings and ecclesiastical denunciations.

To return to the point. The carrying out of the law occurred in a case in which there was not the slightest ground, as it stood, to grant a pardon. The public peace was endangered, the existing laws wantonly set at defiance by men secretly armed, evidently of the lowest social and intellectual grade, traversing the country in all directions, intent upon crime, and calling themselves "patriots" forsooth, being British subjects as well, some of them discharged soldiers from abroad, not inclined to return from acts of bloodshed and plunder to peaceful pursuits in the country of their adoption, but prepared for any new "raid." Under the pretence of patriotism, too, ready for any excess, conspiring to subdue Ireland in their self-assumption and ignorance, the more respectable people there—clergy or laity, Catholic or Protestant—giving them no support. Such were the facts when the

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* A learned judge of judges, sure the *Best*,
Says, "What has stood for eighteen hundred years
The truth must be." Then set your hearts at rest
Ye Moslems all, for now it plain appears
You only have to wait six centuries more,
And all the world at Mecca will adore!

Examiner

offenders were arraigned and suffered for the most heinous of crimes—the use of arms concealed about the person for purposes of murder, and the actual committal of that crime. The fulfilment of his duty acted upon the mind of Mr. Hardy, the Home Secretary, and he most justly carried out the law. He had no alternative but that duty. He showed no vindictive spirit. He simply put the existing laws in force. It was proper to arrest assassination, for doing which the country is bound to confess its obligations to him, while the written law stands unaltered. An organised body of armed men from a foreign land, planning treason secretly, and desiring to make war upon their native country, of which they were still citizens, that foreign country which had sheltered them being at peace with England—what can be said of such persons but that, acting thus lawlessly, they placed themselves beyond the pale of mercy, and were to be dealt with accordingly as men that, not choosing to return to honest pursuits, preferred outrage and the wildest schemes in crime to disturb peaceful people, and even shoot them down at midnight in the streets when giving them no offence. Nor are the intentions of such less indefensible than their want of knowledge is conspicuous in the magnitude of the task they pretend to have undertaken compared with their means. Will Lord Derby and the English people suffer the peace of this country to be thus broken by bands of ignorant men secretly armed, calling themselves "patriots" when really acting as assassins—men who exhibit incredible ignorance of the advance of the time and their own position?

In place of returning to peaceful pursuits after the civil war in America was over, they project assassinations, under the specious pretence of "patriotism;" war and plunder are to be let loose in their native land, and even in England. One thing is certain, that while they dupe their more sober countrymen in the United States out of subscriptions to arm them furtively with instruments of mischief, and for the purpose of effecting a civil war, they are making a rod for their own backs. This great country will not be bearded by armed bands. Ireland itself will not tolerate the practice, as they will find to their cost. Without subordination to any government, the most ignorant of any modern people seek the shores of America in their recklessness, and even there display the same ignorance, unsettled habits, and turbulence, that they display elsewhere. It would be a puzzle of the thinking class that any people so pleasant, genial, and kindly, as the Irish generally, should be imbued in many instances with turbulent elements, and be intermingled, here and there, with those whom no law will bind—a reckless part of idle manhood the most deplorably ignorant. This remark is not new.* The disturbers in the

* Navarette, who wrote in the seventeenth century, says: "The Irish here (in Spain) must be noted as good Catholics, and without evil intentions. A great number have come to Spain, and yet in that great number we do not find one who applies himself to the arts, or to farming, or any other occupation, except to beg. They are a burden to the community which has protected them for their faith's sake, having left their country. But it would be as well if they would apply themselves in Spain to the same arts or business that they carried on in their own land, it being impossible for such a number to remain here, inquirers and idlers as they are."

Carew, in his "Survey of Cornwall," complains of the same thing there.

present day are, many of them, remarkably stolid. The Americans say they act together, "one and all," so that in some places they are sufficiently numerous to influence some elections, about the principle of which they do not trouble themselves, as they vote and act under momentary impulses. Of this stolidity there was a proof given some time ago in the American newspapers. It was as follows:

An Irishman claimed his naturalisation of Judge Gould, in New York, who refused it, because, though able to read and write, he acknowledged that he had never read a word about the American government or constitution he was ready to swear to and uphold. The judge asked:

"Did you ever read that constitution you have to swear fidelity to?"

"No, your honour."

"Or a word of it?"

"No, your honour."

"Can you read and write?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you know one word that is in the constitution of the United States?"

"And I do not, your honour."

"You have lived in this country nearly six years; you can read and write, and yet you have all this time never taken the trouble to learn one word of the instrument (the U.S. constitution) you are now so ready to take a solemn oath to support."

The judge would not administer the oath to him.

Now such are the men who, having left their country, many of them to fight in place of getting an honest livelihood, have been discharged from the service of the United States, and are going to conquer England, revolvers in hand, glowing with a spontaneous patriotism without morality, and nursing an implacable hatred to the English crown, without a sufficiency of the reasoning power to act with the lowest degree of policy, happy to be in a "scrimmage" under any pretence.

An American gentleman informed the writer that in the United States the Irish generally acted together in elections, and on similar public occasions were influenced by sudden impressions. Woe to the candidate whom a leading man of their number opposed! They all clubbed against him, often without principle or reason, and in consequence much more was forborne in regard to their conduct, out of local policy, than would otherwise be the case.

In Ireland the disaffected and violent must perceive, if they have a power of perception the most moderate, that the respectable classes, even those who disapprove of the evils still existing in that island, are all averse to these proceedings. They set their face against tumult and assassination. The Catholic priesthood and friends give them no support. The gentry and respectable farmers furnish no encouragement to the conspiracies of the returned adventurers. Those who join in criminal acts are, for the most part, credulous persons, small farmers of no reputation and little understanding, ignorant workmen, shopmen, and labourers, whom they influence, and who, with the naturally excitable temperament and lack of information prevailing, are very easily

seduced to join whatever is novel, specious, and reported as likely to be successful, on the score of a profitable patriotism; but how to be made profitable they do not trouble themselves to learn.

What chance will men have, who, leaving their country under various pretences, in place of sitting down as peaceable citizens in the New World, determine rather to venture, by force of arms, into a country where such an entrance is rebellion, and the punishment that of treason? This punishment must certainly await them. They will do well to consider that in this great country even the people may find bounds set to their patience. They will not be shot down by midnight assassins calling themselves "patriots," or "Fenians," or "Whiteboys." They may be placed in a position this way before the English population, independently of the authorities, which may cost them much dearer than they expect. Englishmen will not suffer those who desert their country to re-enter it and attempt to dictate by force whatever their evil disposition or violence may prompt, even to committing murders with impunity. The English character is a well-recorded one. That considerable sums of money have been remitted here for the purpose of purchasing arms—particularly those capable of concealment—there can be no doubt. To whatever extent this may proceed, it will be disastrous in the end to those who bear a part in it. The indignant vengeance of the population—more particularly English—must not be tempted too far.

In the formation of the different sections, or rather "circles," as the Fenians denominated them, the turbulent persons only copy a similar body of rebels against the American government during the late war. Thus their plans are not original; and as they were defeated in the Northern States, against which they conspired, they will be defeated here at a much heavier cost to themselves. Let them look to it. As to those who have emigrated, and swear themselves in citizens of the United States, it will be no security for them if taken here in arms. At the peace, after the independence of America was acknowledged, this point of citizenship, up to the time when America became a separate State, became matter of provision, because a British-born subject never loses his citizenship by foreign residence, and without a stipulation he would be a British subject still, wherever he might be, upon the soil of his native territory or not. The plea since, of men having sworn themselves into an American citizenship, will not secure them, if taken in rebellion in these islands, for the foregoing stipulation cannot affect those not American citizens at that time.

Efforts have been made, and much has been done, to remove the evils that pressed upon Ireland in times past. The difficulties principally relative to land have been great. All parties at the head of the State have been in earnest about the matter in recent times, and the larger and sounder part of the Irish Catholic Church, as well as others, knows and feels this to be the case. The late armed attack upon the officers of justice was an evident result of a senseless conspiracy. An outrage by an armed party could not be passed over. We hear still of fresh purchases of costly arms, for which there must be funds forthcoming somewhere. We have no sort of anxiety about the result of a struggle if it take place. A great people will not be bearded by

assassins. The loyal subjects in England and Ireland need not feel the slightest anxiety about the result of any of the schemes of men whose borrowed plans and furtive acts of assassination will be most certainly exposed and punished, call themselves what they may, "patriots," or "Peep-o'-Day Boys," or "Fenians." Still, we deprecate the tumult, and waste, and trouble, as well as the loss of life and property, that must ensue if the conspirators reach the point which will make more examples necessary, ending in their certain and exemplary destruction.

It is pleasant, amidst all, to recollect that the present troubles have no foundation in any demand on the score of religion, and the remnant of other grievances still remaining to be swept away. What few remain cannot affect those who belong to the present conspirators, nor do they justify them. In presenting a firm front to the disturbers of the peace in England or Ireland, it must be remembered that the sister island has never been in that advanced state which its innate natural advantages would give the world reason to expect. We most cordially respond to the passage in the late royal speech, which runs as follows:

"The treasonable conspiracy, commonly known as Fenianism, baffled and repressed in Ireland, has assumed in England the form of organised violence and assassination. These outrages require to be rigorously put down, and I rely for their effectual suppression upon the firm administration of the law, and the loyalty of the great mass of my subjects."

Perhaps the assumption of the name of Fenian, or, more correctly, Phenian, is one of the strongest proofs of that species of ignorance and its assumptions which those among nations that are ill instructed, or not instructed at all in their early history, propagate as truth, when really the wildest fiction. Many of the people of Ireland credit stories of their renown at the court of Pharaoh in Egypt, and of their early greatness. Yet the Romans, who held England for nearly five hundred years, did not think it worthy of their arms, and reported that the people were cannibals. Bede, who died about the year 730, says that the island was divided into north and south Scots, plainly showing whence the people came, instead of being peopled by a part of Noah's immediate family, and visited by Phœnician fleets! Yet do the Irish still dwell upon fabulous tales of a greatness that never existed, and in place of applying themselves to improve their island by agriculture, commerce, and the arts, drive away capitalists, and employ themselves in vain boastings of what they once were, following wild imaginings, and active in any character save in those employments by which they might place themselves and their fine island in advance of the Scotch, who, in a land not half as highly gifted by nature, have raised themselves and their country to a high pitch of renown.

It appears to us that there is something very peculiar in the Irish temperament. We have heard men born and bred among them declare, that while the people possessed many virtues, they were wholly creatures of impulse, and, in some cases, those impulses become unaccountable even to such as fully admitted everything to their advantage. Their want of reasoning power is seen in their actions,

and their utter recklessness on numerous occasions have been remarkable. Their disregard about shedding blood in revenge has been unaccountable, and that with more than savage ferocity. Yet otherwise they are kind and hospitable. It is true that hospitality is a trait continually exhibited among a people nearer than others to a state of nature. Some of the ferocious acts of the lower class of the Irish, not of old date, are on record, which go to prove that principles of action with them are very little considered, and often do not go beyond the prompting of the moment, though in their results they are fearful exhibitions of incivilisation and crime, without remorse involving the innocent as well as guilty, as in the horrible case of the murder of the Sheas, which we well remember. This was a conspiracy in one of the districts of Ireland against a farmer named Shea. The man's crime, in the eyes of the "patriots" of that day, was, that he had taken a farm over the head of another tenant. Can it be credited that for this act alone of one man, that a number of men should combine, and, in the dead of night, set fire to the thatch of the cottage in which he lived, and without remorse destroy eighteen human beings hushed into repose, to have revenge upon one, burning them all to death, infancy and age alike, the wretches who committed the deed looking on and exulting in the act? Yet, except one individual, the actors in the crime had no interest in it—no motive whatever. The miscreants, too, kept their secret. Such was a specimen of the incivilisation of that portion of the people in Ireland, whom no law would restrain in whatever the rude justice of revenge might prompt them to undertake. To burn innocent persons, or to assassinate the agents of the law, is all one. It is true, and not less fortunate, that only a small portion of the untaught and untutored of the island would now go to such length in crime, but it shows how far such characters have gone and may again proceed. Those who have been seasoned by acts of warfare and plunder in the service of a foreign country, and no longer active there, seem now prepared, under any momentary plea, to violate the peace of other lands, where the respectable part of the population is sound. The worthless part join them in robbing shops and in stealing arms to shoot down the agents of justice in the first and second capitals of the empire. The efforts made by the admirers of the Manchester assassins in mock funerals and honours for "Fenian patriots," are painfully ridiculous. Why can they not see—these people without foresight, if having the use of other faculties—that their pretensions to patriotism are idle, that the term should read very differently, and that the people of Ireland do not support them? Their few adherents are of the capacity, though not bereft of the desire, to do mischief. Some may affect to be considered martyrs in patriotism, but their affectation is idle, and will be fatal to their cause. It is not for the "cankers of a calm world" and a transatlantic peace to get up organised assassinations in these islands with impunity, or to kindle a civil war in these realms. It would be far more advisable, and for the advantage of such adventurers, to settle themselves down in the North American States, and devoting themselves to peaceful pursuits, repair the ravages they have aided to commit in the rural districts of those

states, and thus aid in compensating by good the great evils caused in the land to which they had emigrated, under the tremendous conflict which has there just ceased.

We are well aware that we may be throwing our words to the wind, but they contain truth and soberness. We can tell such ignorant and demented persons, as in their state of mental intoxication they see in imaginary perspective those supposed wonders effected which are really hallucinations or deceptions, constituting a mirage before their vision, that they thus wofully deceive themselves, as they will find to their cost in the end. There are two evils prevalent in Ireland, only one of which can affect the people of the class which commits these outrages, or the agricultural part alone. Why not remedy the mischief which, while it does not justify the action in those scenes of violence, gives them an excuse, valid among a certain class, and just in itself to some extent—we mean land tenure. If the landlord be determined to retain, as he has done, a power unjust in principle, let a law be passed, consistent with commercial bargains, touching tenant holdings and improvements. The Church question cannot be one affecting those concerned in the outrages recently committed, bad as it is. Thus, without an excuse, all sympathy would be withdrawn from the disloyal class, and it would be no longer countenanced, unless by those whose motives were mistaken through ignorance. No plea can intervene to soften the course of justice towards such, many of whom are but too happy to find an excuse for that kind of life towards which, without any grievance at all, they would still have an inclination. Even in America, where no cause existed for similar outrages, as in the case of the poor negroes in New York and the Jerseys, where the Irish committed such outrages, and of whom so many were shot down by the American authorities before they were subdued, there was no real cause for their conduct. The Irish only feared, if the negroes were free, that they would engross the labour which they desired to keep to themselves. Would any nation suffer such frantic and cruel outrages with impunity?

The strength of England must and will be much further felt if the course of these disturbers of the peace is continued; and, however painful it may be, those who continue their lawless practices will feel that the people of these islands will not be outraged by midnight assassinations any more than by open rioting and murders, and that the punishment will be as heavy as it will be well merited. We say this with no intention of lessening the bad conduct of such Irish landlords as may be unmindful of their duties, and of any plea they may afford for lawlessness and crime.

We trust that the recent examples made will have their due effect. If there be one scene in this fair world more terrible and more to be deplored than another, it is that of the devastation caused by civil tumults and conspiracies. It is to be hoped that no part of those islands will ever again be subjected to such a scourge. If it should be otherwise, the punishment of the guilty party must find no excuse in the punishment, however painful it may be to contemplate the result. There is a desire in general to see Ireland tranquil, and equal justice dealt out to all her sons. No means is so certain of effecting this good as teaching the landholders that those are duties he is bound

to perform to society as well as to himself. That the humanising means are in his hands, and that, if he fail to do his part, as he did fail to do no long time ago, until he wrought great evil, there will be a reaction fearfully injurious to himself. The late sale of the burdened estates, while affording some relief, at the same time disclosed, through inferences undeniable, the cause of no inconsiderable portion of the real suffering and mischief which must have made too many of the poorer classes in Ireland discontented.

We had proceeded thus far, as if under prophetic influence. We were closing this paper, or on the point of what the judges call "summing up," when we received the intelligence of the ravage committed by those transatlantic bandits that have revisited Europe from America—persons, no doubt, accustomed to crime in the late disastrous war in the United States, and well habituated there in ravaging the planters' domains north or south, all being on an equality for plunder. Since peace has reigned in the United States, those persons are ready to carry rapine and murder to other shores. They have thrown down the gauntlet. It is taken up, as they will find to their cost. If they have not been content to wait a short space of time longer for the removal of what remains of the old complaint in Ireland—if, at the risk of delaying salutary measures, they desire to act in such a way as to protract the reign of their old habits that they may profit by their brainless violence—they will be painfully mistaken. Their intellectual power for evil need not be dreaded, except in its effect upon innocent people—man, woman, and child. Most happily have they explained that the common lowness of their capacity is of a piece with the atrocity of their natures. Their deeds speak for themselves. To set free prisoners by overwhelming them in the ruins of their places of durance was a "happy" display of native character. The destruction of others, innocent of offence, as well as their properties, men, women, and children, speaks the recklessness of individuals of low capacity accustomed to bloodshed and murder in civil war abroad, where, no doubt, as we have already said, friend and foe became in their own peaceful habitations the victims of similar crimes and barbarities. These wretches have set the seal upon their cause. Even their former sympathisers in the scum of the United States must abhor them for their deeds, their cruelties, their ignorance, and that peculiar lack of reflection as to the consequences of their own lawless measures, which, fortunately for others, is a safeguard for such as would else become the victims of their semi-civilisation. What matters it to them how many innocent persons they involve in one common destruction?

It is with no slight degree of pain that we see men of a better station in life than those ruffians, perhaps for the sake of a worthless popularity, sanction processions in honour of assassins—for what are those better who shoot down the agents of that law they would fain live without? They thus lend a species of encouragement to crime. True patriotism never blushes for its principles nor its actions. That the evils caused by the old system of Irish rule, now almost swept away before better principles of government, would soon have been utterly annihilated, there is no doubt. Can there be a surer means of arresting the progress of the only evils the legislature can remedy?

Is it politic or humane to administer hereafter to the support of men for whom humanity must wear a complexion of scarlet? We only ask the people of reflection in the three kingdoms to judge of the morals of those men by their deeds, of their intellect by their allegations, of their patriotism by the dark stain they cast upon their virtue, and to answer whether they do not, by their brutalities, supply one of the strongest arguments that can be adduced against any changes they desire to see effected, leaving the points of the merit or demerit of those changes out of the question.

The people of our great metropolis have now had a specimen of the fruits of Irish apprenticeship in a foreign civil war, of their plottings in their native land, and of the consequences. The Americans feared to give them offence, because they are always ready to join and turn an election on the caprice of the moment, even against old friends. Do these ruffians imagine that this great empire—England, Ireland, the larger and sounder part, and the kingdom of Scotland—is to be overawed by secret combinations for crime, by assassinations, by a bold defiance of the laws, by tumult, and by the conspiracies of such as by their own acts exhibit themselves to the world in their real colours? They are wofully mistaken. This is a day of some little reason in matters of government. The rule of the bandit was never less likely to be tolerated. Those who may not in general be in coincidence of sentiment with the present administration, will rally round and strengthen what was before only a difference in party sentiment, rendering the ruling powers more united and commanding. It is not the habit of an enlightened people to succumb to barbarism, or give way to acts of violence, but to subdue the one and to punish the other. The power of an arm that knows how to deal its blows, and to show the world that it will not permit assassination, and the murders of innocent persons to go without punishment, is ample in these kingdoms. Still we lament the course of things as injurious to freedom; but thus regretting the cost, we would not draw back one step in our proceedings, but vindicate our power. We would punish the criminals with severity, but not suffer in doing that duty the delay of a single step in progress. We are strong enough to pursue such a course. It is well to remember that, acting rightly in this respect, we need not hesitate about consequences. We know our own strength as well as right, and, please God, we will use it to crush all violators of the laws, and more especially those whose impatience for crime, while it betrays their objects, exhibits their intellectual weaknesses in their late attempt to free their own friends, not regarding the destruction of the objects they sought to deliver. Whatever may be the power of such for mischief, we need not dread their power so much as their friendship, to judge from their kindliness towards their friends in durance. We need not dread the understanding which shows such a smallness of mental calibre as the planning to set friends free by blowing them into the air, from which fate—but, unhappily, not the many innocent victims made by the miscreants in question—accident alone saved them, by the keepers changing the hour of the prisoners' exercise. What a happy specimen of intellectual advance in the scholars of the Fenian College!

CYRUS REDDING.

WITH THE FRENCH IN MEXICO.*

MEXICO—a land favoured by Heaven and cursed by man—for ever branded, Cain-like, with the infamous crime of murder! If we turn to it, it is neither for the repulsive present nor the ominous future; it is to glean a pleasant and a picturesque sketch of the stirring past, when Vera Cruz was a very Babel, with Zouaves, Turcos, Chasseurs d'Afrique, and Nubians—belonging to the Egyptian legion—bustling about, and hurrying their way through crowds of Mexicans, Indians, cargadores, arrieros, and impatient travellers, and that in company with Mr. Elton, A.D.C. to Lord Strathnairn, who was bound with Colonel Boyer, chef de cabinet to Marshal Bazaine; Count de Colbert, captain in the Twelfth Chasseurs; and M. Barrés, editor of the *Estafette*, to Mexico—just to see what was going on.

One thing was to be seen at the onset, and that was that Vera Cruz rejoices in many steeples and domes, and that they shone out clear and white like marble against the deep blue of the mountains far away inland. Another was the last rays of the sun faintly lighting up the snow-peak of Orizaba—whoever saw or read picture or description of Mexico, in which Orizaba, Popcateptl, and Ixtaccihuatl, did not figure in the foreground? Vast as the country is, they are so lofty and are such striking objects, as to constitute the chief features of the realm, and if they only bore pronounceable names, their celebrity would be unbounded.

Then, again, there were dangerous-looking black reefs, half covered by the tide; the renowned Castle of San Juan d'Ulloa looming darkly, while just visible in the distance was *La Isla de los Sacrificios*, the wreck of a large vessel, driven on the sands by a strong "norte," standing out in black and ominous effect.

But as to the town itself, narrow dirty streets, crowds of "Zopilotes," vultures, privileged and protected by the law, hopping about in the open and pestiferous gutters, a disagreeable deadly air of decay about the whole place, and the most uncomfortable hotels conceivable, soon made them more than anxious to turn their backs on it and the chances of yellow fever. The French had the good sense—that is, supposing the life of an Egyptian is not worth that of a Zouave or a Chasseur, or that an Egyptian had better chances in the "tierra caliente"—to garrison Vera Cruz with troops from the long valley of the Nile for the several years they were in the country. We have already had occasion to speak favourably of these Egyptian troops when treating of Mexico; and Mr. Elton also speaks of them as exceedingly clean and smart soldiers, their white dresses standing out in striking contrast to the travel-stained uniforms of the French; nor have they in any instance failed to behave admirably before the enemy; in fact, they were more dreaded in the "tierra caliente" by the guerilla bands than most of the other troops

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* With the French in Mexico. By J. F. Elton, late of the 98th Regiment, and A.D.C. to H. E. General Sir Hugh Rose, G.C.B., K.S.I., Commander-in-Chief in India (Lord Strathnairn). Chapman and Hall.

who had the bad fortune to be garrisoned in that unhealthy climate. Perhaps offenders have a wholesome recollection of their vengeance when they sallied forth from Tejeria to kill every man in a village hard by, where one of their comrades had been assassinated; "and I imagine," says Mr. Elton, "it will be many a long day before the freebooters will venture to dwell again in this place of ill omen."

Two days was enough of this hotbed of "vomito," and the second morning saw the party off by the "Imperial Mexican Railroad" to Paso del Macho, a distance of some fifty miles, and the terminus of a line, which, had the imperialists remained in power, would have run to the capital, and not only have established railway communication between the metropolis and its seaport, but would have rendered all delay in the "tierra caliente" unnecessary.

The start hence was effected with an escort of Chasseurs d'Afrique, and greatly did they rejoice when, finding themselves at the top of the Chiquihuite Pass, they entered upon the "tierra templeda," but the road continued hot and dusty to Cordova, a dull little town springing up from amidst a perfect wilderness of tropical vegetation. Hence the road lay along the foot of Orizaba to the town of the same name, and up the difficult and winding road of the Cumbras, the climate improving greatly at each new ascent. On the 22nd of April they passed through Puebla, one of the richest cities belonging to the old clerical party, and abounding in churches and convents, many of which, since the capture of the place by Marshal Forey, were turned into barracks and military storehouses. It was Sunday, and the streets were crowded with people. Mexicans in their best sombreros, Austrians, Hulans, Indians bringing fruit into market, and pretty, graceful little women in black mantillas, hurrying to mass. The 24th brought them to Rio Frio, the highest point between Vera Cruz and Mexico, where they were glad to dine in a small room warmed by a huge pine-log fire, for the cold was intense, and there was even a strong frost during the night. They were, in fact, circling round the two great snow mountains before mentioned, which tower over the valley of Mexico. No wonder that by the Aztecs the "white woman" was regarded as the mysterious deity who presided over the destinies of the land! On the 27th they reached the capital itself by the calzada, as the long straight road is called, which is embanked between the two great lakes of Chalco and Tezcoco, and which dates from the time of Montezuma. Seen from this causeway, the many towers and domes of the innumerable religious edifices, the large extent of the city, the wide-spreading waters of the lakes, and the pure clear air and delightful temperature of the climate, produced a series of impressions decidedly in favour of what was then imperial Mexico.

Mr. Elton admired, indeed, everything in what was then an imperial city—the rides and walks, the plazas and public buildings, the ladies and the dinners. The latter were, however, expensive. At the Tivoli del Eliseo and Tivoli de San Cosme, where the sterner sex dined away from the heat and dust of the city, from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a head, without any wine, was by no means the highest charge. We suspect they were not largely patronised by the Zouaves and Chasseurs d'Afrique. Little dinners, à la maison des quatre Capins, were best suited to their purses. Mr. Elton did not, however, stay long in the capital. Having obtained with De

Colbert permission to join the division of General Douay, then at Saltillo and Montery, he started on the 14th of May with a convoy under Commandant Dupeyron. All the principal towns were at that time held by the French troops or the forces of Maximilian. There were only scattered bands lurking in the mountains, of which those under Escobedo were the most formidable, and they only occasionally annoyed the imperialists by descending from their hiding-places and levying black-mail on any unfortunate train of merchandise they could pounce upon. The last serious affair between the Liberals and the French had, however, been a most unfortunate one for the latter. Escobedo had managed to cross the desert known as the Bolson de Mapimi with a force of two thousand men, and had established himself at the hill and hacienda of Santa Isabel, with the view of cutting off the communication between Matamoras and Montery. De Briant, commandant at Parras, one of the neatest and most civilised towns in the north, celebrated for its excellent wine, took the field at the head of one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty of the foreign legion, with Campos and one hundred and fifty Mexicans and one gun to dislodge them. The force was so inadequate, and the place was so strong—defended as it was by tortuous barrancas or ravines—that the attacking party were worsted. Briant was killed, and one officer and about sixty men remained as prisoners in the hands of the enemy, nearly all being wounded; and to the shame of the Liberals—if shame they have—all the Frenchmen, too badly wounded to follow the rapid marches of their captors, were murdered. Captain Bastidon, who had been left with fifty men in charge of Parras, was also summoned to surrender, but having taken up a position in a loopholed church, he refused, and the cowardly band of Liberals judged it prudent to leave him alone.

Mr. Elton speaks well of the French soldier on the march, and bears testimony to how really admirable he is under evil circumstances. However much rain, mud, or dust may have provoked his anger during the day's march, once that over, he is again gay and cheery, smokes his short black pipe, drinks his goutte of aguardiente, and "mocks himself" of everything in general. All day long, between the downpouring of the rain, the "Zephyrs" stripped to the waste, washed themselves in the shallow river that runs through Arroyo Zarco, and kept up an incessant fire of jokes, intermingled with loud peals of laughter, thoroughly succeeding in astonishing the damp, dismal-looking Mexicans, shivering under cover of their zarapes, who congregatad under the shelter of the hotel walls, waiting for the arrival of the diligence. One comfort they had, which was, that, as they marched northwards, they were marching away as rapidly as possible from the wet season, which begins in the valley of Mexico during May, and, as they got north, the downfals seldom commenced before the afternoon, and by that time the day's march was over.

After travelling for some time over a barren white soil, producing nothing but dry moss, with occasional yuccas and the eternal maguey (aloes), their eyes were gladdened by the sight of the fertile valley and the domes and steeples of the now infamous Queretaro. Here they had two days' halt, starting on the 27th, their convoy heavier and more cumbersome than ever. La Noria, or "the Well," their point on the

29th, was one of the most flourishing haciendas they had yet come across. These vast farms are, like the factories, adapted in such a country to stand a siege. Within is a chapel, as also a "tienda y fonda," where groceries, edibles, and drinkables are sold to the Indians—what money they earn thus finding its way back into the pockets of their masters. The farm-buildings, granaries, storehouses, and corrals, or enclosures for cattle and horses, are all built at a respectful distance from the quadrangular fortress which constitutes the principal homestead, lest they should be captured by the Indians or the Liberals, and made to serve as shelter to the enemy.

The march of the 30th took them to San Luis de la Paz, like Queretaro at that time garrisoned by Zouaves. "Beastly hole, bad quarters, bad food," is the laconic record made of this place in Mr. Elton's diary. At the hacienda of La Sousada, where they halted on the 1st of June, they received intelligence that Escobedo was in Tamaulipas, and that the convoy was liable to be attacked at any moment. This gave zest to an ugly-looking ravine, where ominous heaps of rocks, surmounted by rough crosses, suggested unpleasant ideas; but a sudden turn brought them upon a well-built, clean-looking little town, hidden from view by tall trees. This was Santa Maria del Rico. The market-place was crowded with Indians selling fruit and flowers—the Aztec race, however much they may have degraded, still retaining that exquisite taste and fondness for flowers which was alluded to by Cortes. The convoy was joined at this place by a detachment under Captain Charrier, who was to guard their rear, whilst another detachment had been sent to Las Pilas, half way between Santa Maria and San Luis Potosi, to support them in case of need. Accordingly, the following day they pushed on to Las Pilas, and on the 5th marched into the once celebrated mining city without having seen a sign of an enemy. Charrier was more fortunate, for, on the 6th, he caught a band of guerilleros, and killed some thirty or forty of their number.

San Luis Potosi having sprung up from the vicinity of the once world-famed silver mine of Potosi—now no longer productive, but neglected—has none of the advantages of position enjoyed by Queretaro, Mexico, or Puebla. The city, however, covers a large extent of ground in the centre of a vast and highly cultivated plain, with the hill rich in silver to the right. It is clean—an advantage which it enjoys over even Mexico itself. There is the usual plaza, palace, and cathedral, good shops, and a fair society. The old convent of Guadalupe was fortified and garrisoned by the French. In old times the monks had their fish sent up from Tampico—through the entire breadth of the state of Tamaulipas—by relays of Indian runners. A few cowls were still to be seen moodily and dreamily flitting about at the corners of streets; but "when the Liberals are once more in power," says Mr. Elton, prophetically, "they must take refuge where they best may, or submit to the exactions and insults of that unscrupulous mob." Even at this time, the Liberals being in possession of the interior of the state, the city was cut off from its port, and business was at a perfect stand-still. So San Luis did not benefit either by imperial rule or by French occupation.

Of all the disagreeable halting-places between Vera Cruz and Monterey the worst was the one that followed San Luis—Garrabatilas, with

two or three dirty Indian huts, full of fleas—an insect apparently much to the fancy of all the Aztec race—a pool of bad, muddy water, a waste of sand, and a few scanty trees. Lying down under one of these, it poured all night, adding to the discomforts of an already uncomfortable station. The next day, good quarters in the hacienda of Las Bosas made them forget their annoyances, and passing through the small town of Moctezuma, on the 11th they arrived at Venado, a station of contre-guerilleros, and where they halted a day to rest the mules.

This corps of contre-guerilleros was originally raised by General Forey from among such Mexicans and foreigners as were willing to serve in the "tierra caliente," their mission being to suppress and hunt down the brigands and robbers who infested the region. As their strength increased, their services became more general, and they were well organised for rapid marching, having no carriages, and only bât-mules.

On the 13th the convoy dropped suddenly on the town of Charcas, situated in a hollow basin, "one of the cleanest, neatest, and quietest towns on the great northern high road," and celebrated for its rich silver mines, which are still productive. Mr. Elton made a descent into one of these mines by means of a succession of poles, each resting upon a projecting piece of rock. Two days' march beyond this place, at the dirty town of Guadalupe, the alcade warned them of an assemblage of bands who were to attack them during the night. But after taking the necessary precautions, and keeping everybody on the *qui vive* all night, nothing came of the report, and after halting next day at the hacienda of La Presa, which had been devastated by the bandits, they arrived the morning after (June 17) at Matehuala. Several bands of guerilleros being close to this place, it was not deemed prudent to proceed farther without being reinforced. Whilst here, a bugler who had belonged to the contre-guerilleros deserted, and having been brought back by the Mexicans, it was discovered that the keepers of a small fonda, or shop, were playing the dangerous game of inducing men to desert, giving them a large bounty. It was evidently necessary to put a stop to the system, and at four o'clock the same afternoon—for the French do not lose any time over these matters—a parade was held near the cemetery, the unfortunate *clairon* was shot, and the two *embauchers* were hanged.

The tall volcanic peak El Fradre, rich in copper and silver mines, was visible from Matehuala, and lay between it and the mining district of Catorce. Rumours arriving of bands being on their way to levy a contribution at the mines, a small expedition was sent out at midnight on the 28th, to surprise them if possible. The French, marching all night, arrived in time to capture all the mules laden with plunder; but the bandits running away, they were only able to kill a few men and take one officer prisoner, and on the 3rd of July the mounted troop of Matehuala had another successful affair with a small band in the valley of the town itself. The convoy having at length been reinforced by five hundred men of the legion, under Colonel Guillem, it started on the 12th, the whole country being in a state of disturbance, and news having arrived of the fall of Matamoras and Tampico—the latter defended by Mejia, "one of the most honest generals in the imperial cause."

They had frightful weather all along the road from Matehuala to Saltillo, for during their forced halt the wet season had been gradually

creeping northwards, and now they got in for the very thick of it. At Salado two of the legion were enticed into the brushwood, but turning upon their would-be seducers, they led them and their horses back to the hacienda. The two Mexicans were led across the open space in front of the farm, and hanged upon the trees near the large well. "I do not think," says Mr. Elton, "I shall forget for a long time to come the loud shrieks and lamentations of their wretched wives, who watched by the Noria far away into night, mingling prayers for their husbands' souls, with a grief refusing to be comforted. Yet so it has been, and always will be, as long as war lasts. The greatest blows must unavoidably fall upon those who are not even actors in the scene—the wives and mothers of those that fall." Nothing could more decisively prove the folly of the whole thing.

News arrived at the same place that the garrison of Encarnacion had been attacked that day by a force of some six hundred of the enemy, and the next day two mule-carriages were met with, containing a Mexican family who had been taken prisoners, and had to give a bond for about 800*l.* to obtain their release. On arriving at Encarnacion they found only two stone buildings of any size—the hacienda, held by the French, and the Hôtel de las Diligencias, in which the enemy had for the time being established themselves; but the French had soon dislodged them, with the loss of some of their best men.

Arrived at Saltillo, which is simply described, in the presence of more important events, as differing in no respect from the general run of Mexican towns, Mr. Elton was kindly received by General Douay and his staff, and was by no means sorry to hear that there would soon be a move in the direction of Monterey. The loss of Matamoras, followed by that of Tampico—before noticed—constituted the commencement of the unfavourable turn of affairs for the Empire—the beginning, in fact, as Mr. Elton has it, of the end, being very shortly afterwards followed by the evacuation of all the north. It would, indeed, have required several hundred thousand men to garrison all the cities, towns, and haciendas, in a country with the whole population in hostility. The empress had gone upon her melancholy mission to the court of the Tuileries, where she was shown a statue, and to the court of the Vatican, where she was shown the door. Marshal Bazaine had advanced on San Luis Potosi, and General Douay moved on Monterey, merely to support an evacuation already predetermined upon.

It was on the morning of the 24th of July that the French moved out from Saltillo, en route for Monterey, and a march of thirteen leagues took them to the Rinconada, a bright, green valley, traversed by clear, running streams, shaded by willow and poplar-trees—altogether fresh and bright in appearance, and very cheering to dust-begrimed travellers. But, alas! there were not a couple of habitable apartments to be found in the whole valley—prettily pictured in one of the numerous vignettes which lend a charm to the book—for everything had fallen into the most lamentable state of decay. "It is tolerably safe," says Mr. Elton, "to date all this deterioration throughout the country from the days of the termination of the Spanish rule, for since that period the depredations of the guerilleros have steadily increased, and the want of security discouraging landed proprietors from any attempt to repair damages, apathy and sheer carelessness soon convert a once well-to-do hacienda into a

tumble-down ruined group of uninhabited barns, very uninviting to the traveller." It is, indeed, the characteristic of republics that every one labours solely for himself, with little or no regard for the commonwealth, just as in our own country the republicans advocate the division of the land to prevent the afflux of an agricultural population into the manufacturing towns. As if, were the land thus subdivided, the afflux would not be twice as great in the course of one generation, and the wages of the trades' unionists subjected to a greater competition than ever!

It was a bitterly cold morning (one almost forgets one is in Mexico), and the wind blew keenly in their faces, as the division marched up the steep pass leading from Rinconada to El Alto, from whence the road winds rapidly downwards into the extensive valley of Monterey. On their way they passed the Belgians and the Mexican cavalry of Quiroga; the advance guard of General Jeaningros and his main body was found at Santa Catarina, a large village some two leagues from the town. General Douay's column, accordingly, had nothing to do but to retrace its steps to El Alto, and the evacuation of Monterey was completed without any interference on the part of the enemy, and without the column entering the city.

Two days later they arrived in Saltillo, only waiting to evacuate that place in its turn, and retire on Matchuala. Mr. Elton had, like the king celebrated in nursery tale, only gone up-hill to come back again. He had travelled over seven hundred miles by straight road to within seven of Monterey, only to turn round and retrace his steps! The most amusing part of the Katabasis was that the townspeople, knowing that the occupation of the French was drawing to a close, no longer showed them any civility. In the evening, when the band of the 12th Chasseurs played on the plaza, it was like the Austrians playing at Venice—there was hardly any one to be seen, with the exception of the officers and men of the garrison. The inhabitants of the town, in fact, did not dare to show any civility, for they dreaded the treatment they might meet with from the hands of the Liberals, who awaited patiently at a respectful distance until the departure of the French should leave the road open to them.

Every day troops were marching south, and on the 4th of August General Douay left General Jeaningros commanding the rear-guard, and the next day the Liberals were in Saltillo! Many Mexicans, too, compromised by their adherence to the imperial party, and who had too openly expressed their opinions as "mochos," to run the chance of Liberal clemency, had packed up bag and baggage and accompanied the French column of evacuation. It was, in fact, a kind of exodus of imperialists from the north. The long, straggling train of carts and vehicles of every description was protected by strong advance and rear guards, but it had not much to fear from an attack, for the Liberals were far too busily employed quarrelling with each other, and plundering Monterey and Saltillo, to dream of interrupting the evacuation. General Douay had the large hospital tents pitched at night to protect the fugitives from rain and cold, and as there were no wayside fondas, the various messes were put under contribution for their benefit; but still, Mr. Elton remarks, they, and especially the female portion of the exodus, must have lost a good deal of illusion on the subject of soldiers and the delights of soldiering, and must have ended by wishing themselves anywhere rather than in the midst of a crowded camp and under canvas.

Thus they retraced their steps by successive marches along the dusty, monotonous plains, covered with cacti, aloes, and yuccas—yuccas, aloes, and cacti—every here and there the prairie dogs putting out their heads from their burrows, and wondering what in the world all the noise was about. Luckily, there was no one to tell them that it was the French retreating before the Mexican Liberals. Well might Mr. Elton say "that he felt sure, in his own mind, that it will be a long time before he shall ever be able to contemplate calmly either aloes or yuccas, or any species of cactus, without, at the least, suffering from a partial loss of temper." We only wonder that these vegetable anomalies have not been extirpated from the gardens of Paris.

The annoyances of the exodus were augmented by the wells having in some instances been destroyed by the enemy, and many of the stations had so suffered from reprisals by both parties that they were ruinous and half deserted. The men for picket duty were really to be pitied after a forced march, without water for man or beast. On arriving at Matehuala, as that place was at any rate to be held for some time, it was deemed necessary to strike a vigorous blow at the enemy who were following close in the wake of the retreating column, in order to deter them from annoying the garrison after the departure of the main body of troops, which were directed upon San Luis Potosi and Queretaro. The enemy was accordingly attacked by a retrograde movement on Cedral, and driven out of the place, not however without loss; and although Matehuala was put into a state of defence by trenches and batteries—rendered, indeed, a small Sebastopol in its way—they had still to come back from San Luis to the relief of De la Hayrie, who was left in charge of the place before it was finally abandoned. The period popularly termed "la guerre aux adobes" (huts built of sun-dried bricks) was now entered upon, and every precaution was taken to ensure the outpost towns against any attack that should be made upon them by superior forces. General Douay was also detained at Venado by a curious contretemps. The Belgian Legion had been ordered up to reinforce De la Hayrie at Matehuala, but the officers had engaged for two years, with the understanding that at the expiration of that time, if they did not report themselves in Belgium, they would be considered as having definitely accepted service under the Mexican empire, and their places would be filled up in the regiments to which they belonged. This was, under the existing gloomy aspect of the empire, by no means a desirable finale, and the consequence was that Colonel van der Smissen, commanding the legion, and who had sacrificed his private interests to those of the corps, arrived at Venado with eight hundred men and only three officers at their head. But, it might be asked, why were the Belgians enrolled under such circumstances expected to go back to the then limitrophal outpost of the empire in the north, when there were so many French in the country? The difficulty was, however, got over by Maximilian ordering the cadre of officers to be filled up by second-lieutenants and non-commissioned officers promoted from the legion, which was then allowed to retrace its steps to Queretaro, and did not go northwards. These "braves Belges" were by no means indifferent soldiers; they were exceedingly clean, well disciplined, well armed, orderly, and full of pluck. One cannot be surprised, however, at the officers acting as they did, seeing that the French were evacuating the country.

On the 7th of September, the column under General Douay arrived at

the city of San Luis Potosi and comparative civilisation. They had a long spell here, for it was the 14th of October before a further move was made. The Liberals were, in the mean time, busily engaged in organising their forces in the north, and purchasing guns and munitions of war from the Americans across the Rio Grande, paying for them with the money they succeeded in screwing out of the various towns which fell into their hands. De la Hayrie was one of the first to be attacked at the outpost of Matehuala, and the enemy invested the place, cutting off the water supply, as also all communication with San Luis. It was necessary, therefore, to send relief, and this was done by forced marches on the 14th of October. Luckily, Mr. Elton was attached to General Douay's column, which was composed only of cavalry and artillery, so that they could get over the ground quickly. At Las Boccas they were, however, joined by Saussier's infantry, who kept up with the cavalry, and, together, they accomplished fifty-three leagues from San Luis in five days, or at the rate of about thirty miles a day.

Immediately on the arrival of General Douay's division at Matehuala an attack was organised against the Liberals, supposed to be in the Valle de Miembres; but the country was so replete with difficulties, and the passes and barrancas were so puzzling, that the enemy were enabled to beat a hasty retreat without suffering much loss. It was determined, however, to push the cavalry on towards Laca—the line of the enemy's retreat—and to give them such a gallop that they would not again meddle with affairs at Matehuala until that place could be quietly evacuated. The line of retreat was marked by carbines, stirrups, and sombreros, with now and then a stray horse, and the rear-guard being come up with at the village of San Miguel, it was broken and dispersed, and several prisoners were captured. From the latter it was ascertained that the force they were pursuing consisted of three divisions, all cavalry, under Trevino, Naranco, and Zapeda, the whole about two thousand five hundred strong, under the command of Trevino; and that their present point was either Valle Purissima, through Laca, or across the mountains by Estaca to Soledad, where they had a considerable force. Following up the pursuit, the rear-guard was once more come up with the same evening, and engaged with success; but the enemy made for Soledad, and the next day Valle Purissima was occupied without opposition. An advance was made thence towards Soledad, but hearing that the enemy had continued its retreat towards Valle Potosi, it was decided upon returning to Matehuala.

By the 28th the last Frenchman was out of this town—in this instance, Mr. Elton says, to the grief of the inhabitants, who rejoiced in the protection given to them; and no wonder, for the "leva," as the forcible impressment of soldiers was called, was practised by Liberals and Imperials alike, and Quiroga and Campos had made prisoners of all the male inhabitants of Valle Purissima they could lay hands upon. On the 2nd they were once more in San Luis Potosi, the retreat, or "downward march," as Mr. Elton facetiously terms it, being almost as rapid as the advance, being hastened by the intelligence that San Luis was to be speedily left to its fate, with Mejia to defend it, and a small French contingent—General Douay retiring upon Mexico. Everything, in fact, seemed to be going against the empire; the Austrians had been defeated by Porfirio Diaz at Carbonera, on the road to Oajaca, and this latter city

soon followed the fate of Matamoras, Tampico, Monterey, Saltillo, and Matehuala. The good people of San Luis welcomed the French heartily, but they had only a few days to remain in the city, for instructions had arrived from Mexico appointing an early day for the move to the south, and regulating the order for the departure of the various corps upon Queretaro. The backward journey to the latter place was effected in seven days, with nothing out of the way to record; and the column only stopped there a day, moving off at once for Mexico, where it arrived on the 22nd of November. At Arroyo Sarco they found the telegraph-wires cut on both sides between Mexico and San Luis, and bands had collected in the neighbourhood, menacing the little garrison of the place. On coming within sight of the great lakes they also saw a strong body of guerilleros in the plain beneath them, waiting to waylay the diligence. They were exceedingly astonished at seeing a French column on the road, and made the best of their way off across country as fast as they could scamper. The ground was, as usual, too broken and dangerous to send even cavalry after them. The barrancas are wonderful preserves for robbers, guerilleros, and rebels of all kinds and descriptions in Mexico.

It was generally expected that Maximilian would have abdicated with the French; but the Church party, which, after inviting the emperor to the rescue of the country, had become his bitter enemies, because he had not given them back all their property and privileges confiscated by Juarez, now felt that with the departure of Maximilian their position would be infinitely worse, so they rallied round the emperor, and placed soldiers, money, and the two most able generals in Mexico, Marquez and Miramon, at his disposition. The rest—the treachery of Lopez and the political assassination of Maximilian—are now matters of history.

"The victim of a relentlessly pursuing fate," writes Mr. Elton, in conclusion, "Maximilian has perished in consequence of his unwillingness to abandon his supporters, and avail himself of the opportunity afforded to lay down his crown at the time of the departure of the French. To prove to the world that the chivalrous blood of the Hapsburgs ran true to all its traditions in his veins, he has sacrificed his own life, and at the same time rendered the position of his party ten times worse than it was, had he in the first instance refused the offers of Miramon and Marquez, and left the country.

"It is almost idle to imagine that the Mexicans will be punished for their unpardonable crime—the murder of Maximilian—by any European power or powers; but it will not be long before, in the natural course of events, the United States will overrun the country. Then the Liberals—Liberals only as far as murder, robbery, and cowardice are compromised in the interpretation of the term—will be able to judge whether the easy yoke of Maximilian and the wonderful forbearance of the French occupation are in any way comparable, in point of severity, with the avowed policy of extermination, and the stern justice of the rough-handed filibusters who, crossing the Rio Grande, will look simply on the country as a land of promise, and be ready, with fire and sword, to take to themselves all the milk and the honey, all the corn, the wine, and the oil. And the judgment in this case will be no more than strictly just."